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THE
FIRST BOOK
OF
PARADISE LOST.

THE ARGUMENT.

This first book proposes, first, in brief, the whole subject, man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise, wherein he was placed; then touches the prime cause of his fall, the serpent, or rather Satan in the serpent; who, revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of angels, was, by the command of God, driven out of Heaven with all his crew into the great deep. Which action passed over, the poem hastes into the midst of things, presenting Satan with his angels now fallen into Hell, described here, not in the center (for Heaven and Earth may be supposed as yet not made, certainly not yet accursed), but in a place of utter darkness, fitliest called Chaos. Here Satan with his angels lying on the burning lake, thunder-struck and astonished, after a certain space recovers, as from confusion, and calls up him who next in order and dignity lay by him: they confer of their miserable fall. Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded: they rise; their numbers, array of battel, their chief leaders named, according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech, comforts them with hope yet of regaining Heaven, but tells them lastly of a new world and a new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy or report in Heaven; for, that angels were long before this visible creation, was the opinion of many ancient fathers. To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine thereon, he refers to a full council. What his associates thence attempt. Pandæmonium, the palace of Satan, rises, suddenly built out of the deep: the infernal peers there sit in council.



J. Richardson Pinx.

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Bartholomaeus sculp.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK I.

OF man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, heav'nly Muse, that, on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed,
In the beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth
Rose out of Chaos: or, 'if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook, that flow'd
Fast by the oracle of God; I thence
Invoke thy aid to my advent'rous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.

And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first
Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,
Dove-like, sat'st brooding on the vast abyss,
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark,
Illumine; what is low, raise and support;
That, to the highth of this great argument,
I may assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.

Say first; for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of Hell; say first, what cause
Mov'd our grand parents, in that happy state,
Favor'd of Heav'n so highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and transgress his will
For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?
Th' infernal serpent; he it was, whose guile,
Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceiv'd
The mother of mankind, what time his pride
Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his host
Of rebel angels, by whose aid aspiring
To set himself in glory 'bove his peers,
He trusted to have equal'd the most High,
If he oppos'd; and, with ambitious aim,
Against the throne and monarchy of God,
Rais'd impious war in Heav'n, and battel proud,
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Pow'r
Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky,

With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamant chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded though immortal. But his doom
Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought,
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain,
Torments him. Round he throws his baleful eyes,
That witness'd huge affliction and dismay,
Mix'd with obdurate pride and steadfast hate.
At once, as far as angels ken, he views
The dismal situation waste and wild:
A dungeon horrible on all sides round,
As one great furnace, flam'd; yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible
Serv'd only to discover fights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes,
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd.
Such place eternal Justice had prepar'd
For those rebellious, here their prison ordain'd
In utter darkness, and their portion set
As far remov'd from God and light of Heav'n,
As from the center thrice to th' utmost pole.
Oh how unlike the place from whence they fell!

There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
He soon discerns, and, weltring by his side,
One next himself in pow'r, and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd
Beëlzebub. To whom th' Arch-Enemy,
And thence in Heav'n call'd Satan, with bold words,
Breaking the horrid silence, thus began.

If thou be'st he; but Oh how fall'n! how chang'd
From him, who in the happy realms of light,
Cloth'd with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
Myriads though bright! If he whom mutual league,
United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
And hazard in the glorious enterprise,
Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd
In equal ruin; into what pit thou seest
From what highth fall'n, so much the stronger prov'd
He with his thunder: and, till then, who knew
The force of those dire arms? yet not for those,
Nor what the potent Victor in his rage
Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
Though chang'd in outward lustre, that fix'd mind,
And high disdain, from sense of injur'd merit,
That with the Mightiest rais'd me to contend,
And to the fierce contention brought along
Innumerable force of spirits arm'd,
That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,
His utmost pow'r with adverse pow'r oppos'd,
In dubious battel, on the plains of Heav'n,

And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
All is not lost; th' unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield,
And what is else not to be overcome:
That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deify his pow'r,
Who, from the terror of this arm, so late
Doubted his empire; that were low indeed;
That were an ignominy and shame beneath
This downfall; since by fate the strength of Gods,
And this empyreal substance, cannot fail;
Since, through experience of this great event,
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanc'd,
We may with more successful hope resolve
To wage by force or guile eternal war,
Irreconcilable to our grand foe,
Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy
Sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heav'n.

So spake th' apostate Angel, though in pain,
Vaunting aloud, but rack'd with deep despair:
And him thus answer'd soon his bold compeer.

O Prince, O Chief of many throned pow'rs,
That led th' embattel'd Seraphim to war
Under thy conduct, and, in dreadful deeds
Fearless, endanger'd Heav'n's perpetual King,
And put to proof his high supremacy,

Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate ;
Too well I see and rue the dire event,
That, with sad overthrow and foul defeat,
Hath lost us Heav'n, and all this mighty host
In horrible destruction laid thus low,
As far as Gods and heav'nly essences
Can perish ; for the mind and spirit remains
Invincible, and vigor soon returns,
Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
Here swallow'd up in endless misery.
But what if he our Conqu'ror (whom I now
Of force believe almighty, since no less
Than such could have o'erpow'r'd such force as our's)
Have left us this our spirit and strength entire,
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
Or do him mightier service as his thralls
By right of war, whate'er his business be,
Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,
Or do his errands in the gloomy deep ?
What can it then avail, though yet we feel
Strength undiminish'd, or eternal being,
To undergo eternal punishment ?

Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-Fiend reply'd.
Fall'n Cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suff'ring : but of this be sure ;
To do aught good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to his high will

Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labor must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil;
Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destin'd aim.
But see, the angry victor hath recall'd
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
Back to the gates of Heav'n: the sulph'rous hail,
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid
The fiery furge, that from the precipice
Of Heav'n receiv'd us falling; and the thunder,
Wing'd with red light'ning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.
Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn,
Or satiate fury, yield it from our foe.
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
The seat of desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimm'ring of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
From off the tossing of these fiery waves;
There rest, if any rest can harbour there;
And, re-assembling our afflicted pow'rs,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain from hope,
If not, what resolution from despair.

Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate,
With head up-lift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blaz'd, his other parts besides
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
Lay floating many a rood; in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr'd on Jove,
Briarëos or Typhon, whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held; or that sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim th' ocean stream:
Him haply slumb'ring on the Norway foam,
The pilot of some small night-founder'd skiff,
Deeming some island, oft, as sea-men tell,
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind,
Moors by his side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wished morn delays:
So stretch'd out huge in length, the Arch-Fiend lay
Chain'd on the burning lake; nor ever thence
Had ris'n, or heav'd his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling Heav'n
Left him at large to his own dark designs;
That with reiterated crimes he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he fought
Evil to others, and enrag'd might see
How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy, shown
On man by him seduc'd, but, on himself,
Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance, pour'd.
Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool

His mighty stature: on each hand, the flames,
Driv'n backward, slope their pointing spires; and, roll'd
In billows, leave i'th' midst a horrid vale.
Then, with expanded wings, he steers his flight
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,
That felt unusual weight, till on dry land
He lights, if it were land that ever burn'd
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire;
And such appear'd in hue, as when the force
Of subterranean wind transports a hill
Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side
Of thund'ring Ætna, whose combustible
And fuel'd entrails, thence conceiving fire,
Sublim'd with min'ral fury, aid the winds,
And leave a singed bottom all involv'd
With stench and smoke: such resting found the sole
Of unblest feet. Him follow'd his next mate,
Both glory'ing to have 'scap'd the Stygian flood
As Gods, and by their own recover'd strength,
Not by the suff'rance of supernal pow'r.

Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,
(Said then the lost Arch-Angel), this the seat
That we must change for Heav'n? this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he
Who now is Sovran can dispose and bid
What shall be right: farthest from him is best,
Whom reason hath equal'd, force hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,
Where joy for ever dwells! Hail, horrors! Hail,

Infernal world! and thou, profoundest Hell,
Receive thy new possessor; one who brings
A mind not to be chang'd by place or time.
The mind is it's own place; and, in itself,
Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be, all but less than he
Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy; will not drive us hence:
Here we may reign secure; and, in my choice,
To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell;
Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heav'n.
But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
Th' associates and copartners of our loss,
Lie thus astonish'd on th' oblivious pool,
And call them not to share with us their part
In this unhappy mansion, or once more,
With rally'd arms, to try what may be yet
Regain'd in Heav'n, or what more lost in Hell?

So Satan spake; and him Beëlzebub
Thus answer'd. Leader of those armies bright,
Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foil'd!
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
Of hope in fears and dangers; heard so oft
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
Of battle when it rag'd; in all assaults
Their surest signal; they will soon resume
New courage, and revive, though now they lie

Grov'ling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,
As we erewhile, astounded and amaz'd ;
No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious highth.

He scarce had ceas'd, when the superior Fiend
Was moving tow'rd the shore ; his pond'rous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,
Behind him cast ; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views,
At ev'ning, from the top of Fesolé,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty globe.
His spear (to equal which the tallest pine,
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
Of some great ammiral, were but a wand)
He walk'd with, to support uneasy steps
Over the burning marle ; not like those steps
On Heaven's azure ; and the torrid clime
Smote on him fore besides, vaulted with fire :
Nathless he so endur'd, till on the beach
Of that inflamed sea he stood, and call'd
His legions, angel forms, who lay entranc'd,
Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades
High over-arch'd imbow'r ; or scatter'd sedge
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd
Hath vex'd the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
Bustis and his Memphian chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred they pursu'd

The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
From the safe shore their floating carcases
And broken chariot-wheels: so thick bestrown,
Abject and lost, lay these, cov'ring the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous change.
He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep
Of Hell resounded. Princes, Potentates,
Warriors, the flow'r of Heav'n, once your's, now lost,
If such astonishment as this can seize
Eternal spirits! or have ye chos'n this place
After the toil of battel to repose
Your weary'd virtue, for the ease you find
To slumber here, as in the vales of Heav'n?
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
T' adore the conqueror? who now beholds
Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood
With scatter'd arms and ensigns, till anon
His swift pursuers from Heav'n-gates discern
Th' advantage, and descending tread us down
Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts
Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf.
Awake, arise, or be for ever fall'n!

They heard, and were abash'd; and up they sprung
Upon the wing; as when men wont to watch
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
Yet to their gen'ral's voice they soon obey'd,

Innum'able. As when the potent rod
Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
Wav'd round the coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud
Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile:
So numberless were those bad angels seen,
Hov'ring on wing under the cope of Hell,
'Twixt upper, nether, and furrounding fires;
Till, as a signal giv'n, th' up-lifted spear
Of their great fultan waving to direct
Their course, in even balance down they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain;
A multitude, like which the populous north
Pour'd never from her frozen loins, to pass
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barb'rous sons
Came like a deluge on the south, and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands!
Forthwith, from ev'ry squadron and each band,
The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
Their great commander; God-like shapes and forms
Excelling human, princely Dignities,
And Pow'rs that erst in Heaven sat on thrones;
Though of their names in heav'nly records now
Be no memorial; blotted out and ras'd,
By their rebellion, from the books of life.
Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
Got them new names, till, wand'ring o'er the earth,
Through God's high suff'rance for the trial of man,
By falsities and lyes the greatest part

Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
God their Creator, and th' invifible
Glory of him that made them to transform
Oft to the image of a brute, adorn'd
With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
And devils to adore for Deities :
Then were they known to men by various names,
And various idols, through the Heathen world.

Say, Mufe, their names then known, who firft, who laft,
Rous'd from the flumber, on that fiery couch,
At their great emp'ror's call, as next in worth
Came fingly where he flood on the bare ftrand,
While the promifcuous croud flood yet aloof?
The chief were thofe who, from the pit of Hell
Roaming to feek their prey on earth, durft fix
Their feats long after next the feat of God,
Their altars by his altar, Gods ador'd
Among the nations round, and durft abide
Jehovah thund'ring out of Sion, thron'd
Between the Cherubim ; yea, often plac'd
Within his fanctuary itfelf their fhines,
Abominations ; and with curfed things
His holy rites and folemn feafts profan'd,
And with their darknefs durft affront his light.
Firft Moloch, horrid king, befmeared with blood
Of human facrifice, and parents' tears ;
Though, for the noife of drums and timbrels loud,
Their children's cries unheard, that pafs'd through fire
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite

Worship'd in Rabba and her wat'ry plain,
In Argob and in Bafan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart
Of Solomon he led, by fraud, to build
His temple right against the temple of God,
On that opprobrious hill; and made his grove
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
And black Gehenna call'd, the type of Hell.
Next Chemos, th' obscene dread of Moab's sons,
From Aroär to Nebo, and the wild
Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon
And Horonäim, Seon's realm, beyond
The flow'ry dale of Sibma, clad with vines,
And Eleälé, to th' Asphaltic pool.
Peör his other name, when he entic'd
Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.
Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarg'd
Ev'n to that hill of scandal, by the grove
Of Moloch homicide; lust hard by hate;
Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.
With these came they, who, from the bord'ring flood
Of old Euphrates, to the brook that parts
Egypt from Syrian ground, had gen'ral names
Of Baälim and Ashtaroth; those male,
These feminine: for Spirits, when they please,
Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
And uncompounded is their essence pure,
Not ti'd or manacled with joint or limb,

Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
Like cumbrous flesh; but, in what shape they choose,
Dilated or condens'd, bright or obscure,
Can execute their aery purposes,
And works of love or enmity fulfil.
For those the race of Israel oft forsook
Their living strength, and unfrequented left
His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
To bestial Gods; for which their heads, as low
Bow'd down in battel, sunk before the spear
Of despicable foes. With these in troop
Came Astoreth, whom the Phœnicians call'd
Astarté, queen of Heav'n, with crescent horns;
To whose bright image nightly by the moon
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs,
In Sion also not unfung, where stood
Her temple on th' offensive mountain, built
By that uxorious king, whose heart, though large,
Beguil'd by fair idolatresses, fell
To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur'd
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate,
In am'rous ditties, all a summer's day;
While smooth Adonis from his native rock
Ran purple to the sea, suppos'd with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,
Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led,
His eye survey'd the dark idolatries

Of alienated Judah. Next came one
Who mourn'd in earnest, when the captive ark
Maim'd his brute image, head and hands lopp'd off
In his own temple, on the groundsel edge,
Where he fell flat, and sham'd his worshipers :
Dagon his name, sea-monster, upward man
And downward fish : yet had his temple high
Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon,
And Accaron, and Gaza's frontier bounds.
Him follow'd Rimmon, whose delightful feat
Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.
He also 'gainst the house of God was bold :
A leper once he lost, and gain'd a king,
Ahaz, his sottish conqu'ror, whom he drew
God's altar to disparage and displace
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
His odious off'rings, and adore the Gods
Whom he had vanquish'd. After these appear'd
A crew who, under names of old renown,
Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,
With monstrous shapes and forceries abus'd
Fanatic Egypt and her priests, to seek
Their wand'ring Gods, disguis'd in brutish forms
Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape
Th' infection, when their borrow'd gold compos'd
The calf in Oreb ; and the rebel king
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,
Lik'ning his Maker to the grazed ox,

Jehovah, who, in one night, when he pass'd
From Egypt marching, equal'd with one stroke
Both her first-born and all her bleating Gods.
Belial came last, than whom a Spirit more lewd
Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love
Vice for itself: to him no temple stood,
Or altar smok'd; yet who more oft than he
In temples and at altars, when the priest
Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who fill'd
With lust and violence the house of God?
In courts and palaces he also reigns,
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
And injury, and outrage: and, when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
Expos'd a matron, to avoid worse rape.

These were the prime in order and in might;
The rest were long to tell, though far renown'd;
Th' Ionian Gods, of Javan's issue held
Gods, yet confess'd later than Heav'n and Earth,
Their boasted parents; Titan, Heav'n's first born,
With his enormous brood, and birth-right seiz'd
By younger Saturn; he from mightier Jove,
His own and Rhea's son, like measure found;
So Jove usurping reign'd: these first in Crete
And Ida known, thence on the snowy top

Of cold Olympus rul'd the middle air,
Their highest Heav'n; or on the Delphian cliff,
Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
Of Doric land; or who, with Saturn old,
Fled over Adria to th' Hesperian fields,
And o'er the Celtic roam'd the utmost isles.

All these, and more, came flocking; but with looks
Down-cast and damp, yet such wherein appear'd
Obscure some glimpse of joy, to have found their chief
Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost
In loss itself; which on his count'nance cast
Like doubtful hue: but he, his wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais'd
Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears:
Then straight commands, that, at the warlike sound
Of trumpets loud and clarions, be uprear'd
His mighty standard: that proud honor claim'd
Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall;
Who forthwith from the glitt'ring staff unfurl'd
Th' imperial ensign, which, full high advanc'd,
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
With gems and golden lustre rich emblaz'd,
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds;
At which the universal host up-sent
A shout that tore Hell's concave, and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
All in a moment through the gloom were seen

Ten thousand banners rise into the air,
With orient colors waving : with them rose
A forest huge of spears ; and thronging helms
Appear'd, and ferried shields in thick array,
Of depth immeasurable : anon they move,
In perfect phalanx, to the Dorian mood
Of flutes and soft recorders ; such as rais'd
To highth of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle, and, instead of rage,
Delib'rate valor breath'd, firm, and unmov'd
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat ;
Nor wanting pow'r to mitigate and sue,
With solemn touches, troubled thoughts, and chase
Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain,
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,
Breathing united force, with fixed thought,
Mov'd on in silence to soft pipes, that charm'd
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil ; and now
Advanc'd in view they stand, a horrid front
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
Of warriors old with order'd spear and shield,
Awaiting what command their mighty chief
Had to impose. He through the armed files
Darts his experienc'd eye ; and soon traverse
The whole battalion views, their order due,
Their visages and stature, as of Gods ;
Their number last he sums. And now his heart
Distends with pride, and hard'ning in his strength
Glories ; for never, since created man,
Met such imbody'd force, as, nam'd with these,

Could merit more than that small infantry
Warr'd on by cranes ; though all the giant brood
Of Phlegra with th' heroic race were join'd
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
Mix'd with auxiliar Gods ; and what resounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son,
Begirt with British and Armoric knights ;
And all who since, baptiz'd or infidel,
Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,
Damasco, or Maroccò, or Trebifond,
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore,
When Charlemain with all his peerage fell
By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ'd
Their dread commander. He, above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tow'r : his form had yet not lost
All her original brightness, nor appear'd
Less than arch-angel ruin'd, and th' excess
Of glory obscur'd : as when the sun new-ris'n
Looks through the horizontal misty air,
Shorn of his beams, or, from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs : darken'd so, yet shone
Above them all th' Arch-Angel : but his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd, and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and confid'rate pride
Waiting revenge : cruel his eye, but cast

Signs of remorse and passion, to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather
(Far other once beheld in bliss), condemn'd
For ever now to have their lot in pain ;
Millions of Spirits for his fault amerc'd
Of Heav'n, and from eternal splendors flung
For his revolt ; yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory wither'd ; as, when Heaven's fire
Hath scath'd the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
With singed top their stately growth, though bare,
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepar'd
To speak ; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half enclose him round
With all his peers : attention held them mute.
Thrice he assay'd ; and thrice, in spite of scorn,
Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth : at last,
Words interwove with sighs found out their way.

O Myriads of immortal Spirits, O Pow'rs
Matchless, but with th' Almighty ! and that strife
Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change,
Hateful to utter : but what pow'r of mind,
Foreseeing, or presaging, from the depth
Of knowledge past or present, could have fear'd,
How such united force of Gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse ?
For who can yet believe, though after loss,
That all these puissant legions, whose exile
Hath empty'd Heav'n, shall fail to re-ascend

Self-rais'd, and repossess their native seat?
For me be witness all the host of Heav'n,
If counsels different, or danger shunn'd
By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns
Monarch in Heav'n, till then as one secure
Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
Consent or custom, and his regal state
Put forth at full; but still his strength conceal'd,
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,
So as not either to provoke, or dread
New war, provok'd; our better part remains
To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
What force effected not; that he no less
At length from us may find, who overcomes
By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
Space may produce new worlds; whereof so rife
There went a fame in Heav'n, that he ere long
Intended to create, and therein plant
A generation, whom his choice regard
Should favor equal to the sons of Heav'n:
Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
Our first eruption; thither or elsewhere:
For this infernal pit shall never hold
Celestial Spirits in bondage, nor th' abyss
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
Full counsel must mature: peace is despair'd;
For who can think submission? War then, war,
Open or understood, must be resolv'd.

He spake : and, to confirm his words, out-flew
Millions of flaming fwords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty Cherubim ; the sudden blaze
Far round illumin'd Hell : highly they rag'd
Against the High'est, and fierce with grasped arms
Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance tow'rd the vault of Heav'n.

There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top
Belch'd fire and rolling smoke ; the rest entire
Shone with a glossy scurf, undoubted sign
That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
The work of sulphur. Thither wing'd with speed
A num'rous brigad hasten'd ; as when bands
Of pioneers, with spade and pick-axe arm'd,
Fore-run the royal camp, to trench a field,
Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on ;
Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell
From Heav'n ; for ev'n in Heav'n his looks and thoughts
Were always downward bent ; admiring more
The riches of Heav'n's pavement, trodden gold,
Than aught divine or holy else enjoy'd
In vision beatific : by him first
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
Ransack'd the center, and with impious hands
Rifled the bowels of their mother earth
For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
Open'd into the hill a spacious wound,
And digg'd out ribs of gold. Let none admire
That riches grow in Hell ; that foil may best

Deserve the precious bane. And here let those
Who boast in mortal things, and wond'ring tell
Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
Learn how their greatest monuments of fame,
And strength, and art, are easily out-done
By spirits reprobate ; and, in an hour,
What in an age they with incessant toil
And hands innumerable scarce perform.
Nigh on the plain in many cells prepar'd,
That underneath had veins of liquid fire
Sluc'd from the lake, a second multitude
With wond'rous art founded the massy ore,
Sev'ring each kind, and scumm'd the bullion dross :
A third as soon had form'd within the ground
A various mould, and from the boiling cells
By strange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook ;
As in an organ, from one blast of wind,
To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.
Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet ;
Built like a temple, where pilasters round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave ; nor did there want
Cornice or freeze, with bossy sculptures grav'n ;
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
Nor great Alcairo, such magnificence
Equal'd in all their glories, to inshrine
Belus or Serapis their Gods, or seat
Their kings, when Ægypt with Assyria strove

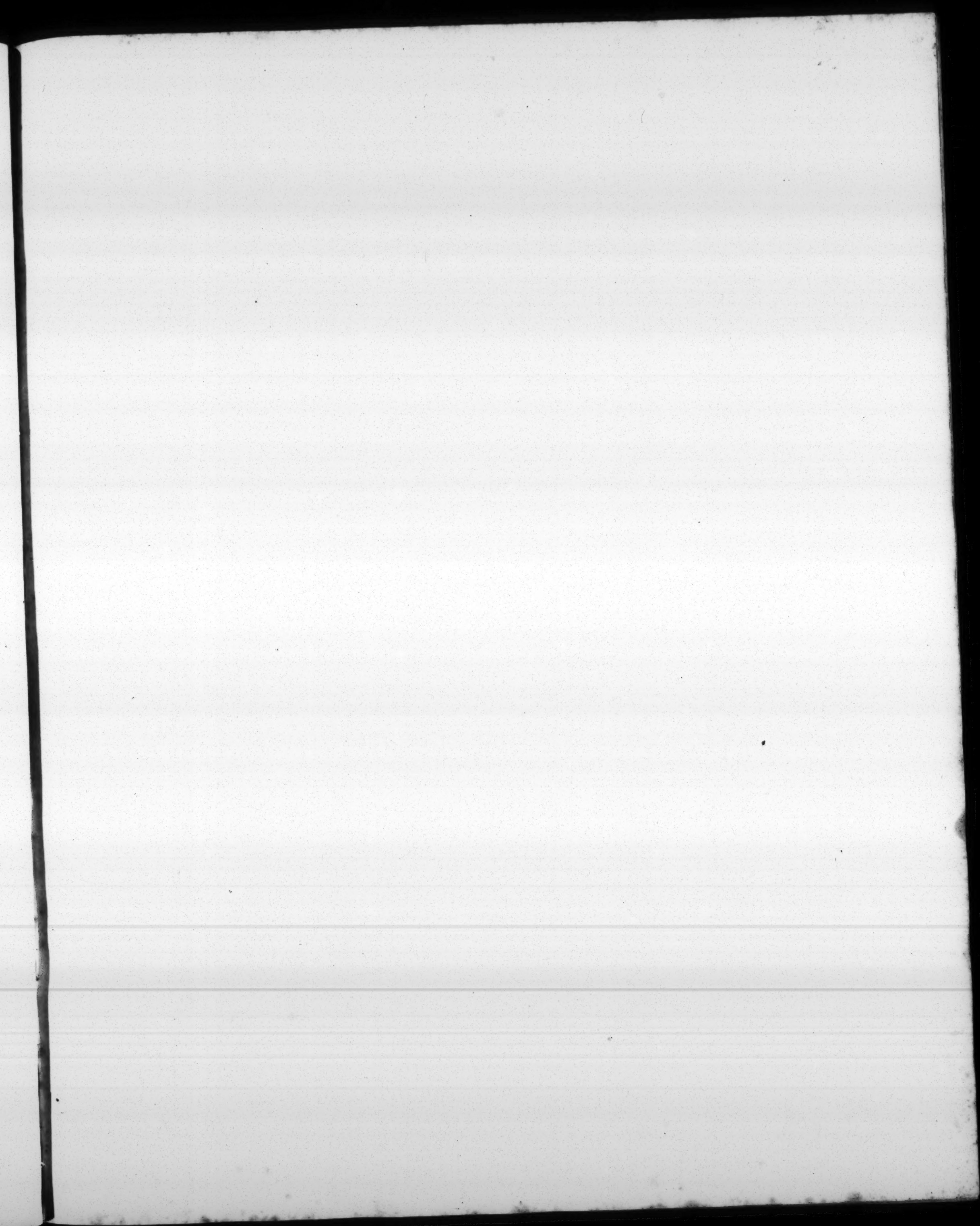
In wealth and luxury. Th' ascending pile
Stood fix'd her stately highth ; and straight the doors,
Op'ning their brazen folds, discover wide,
Within, her ample spaces, o'er the smooth
And level pavement : from the arched roof,
Pendent by subtle magic, many a row
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed
With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light,
As from a sky. The hasty multitude
Admiring enter'd ; and the work some praise,
And some the architect : his hand was known
In Heav'n by many a tow'red structure high,
Where scepter'd angels held their residence,
And sat as princes, whom the supreme King
Exalted to such pow'r, and gave to rule,
Each in his hiérarchy, the orders bright.
Nor was his name unheard or unador'd
In ancient Greece ; and, in Ausonian land,
Men call'd him Mulciber ; and how he fell
From Heav'n, they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
Sheer o'er the crystal battlements ; from morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
A summer's day ; and, with the setting sun,
Dropp'd from the zenith, like a falling star,
On Lemnos, th' Ægean isle : thus they relate,
Erring ; for he with this rebellious rout
Fell long before ; nor aught avail'd him now
To have built in Heav'n high tow'rs ; nor did he 'scape
By all his engines, but was headlong sent
With his industrious crew to build in Hell.

Mean-while the winged heralds, by command
Of sovran pow'r, with awful ceremony
And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim
A solemn council forthwith to be held
At Pandæmonium, the high capital
Of Satan and his peers : their summons call'd
From ev'ry band and squared regiment,
By place or choice the worthiest ; they anon
With hundreds and with thousands trooping came
Attended : all access was throng'd ; the gates
And porches wide ; but chief the spacious hall
(Though like a cover'd field, where champions bold
Wont ride in arm'd, and, at the Soldan's chair,
Defy'd the best of Panim chivalry
To mortal combat, or career with lance)
Thick swarm'd, both on the ground and in the air,
Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
In spring-time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive
In clusters ; they among fresh dews and flow'rs
Fly to and fro ; or on the smoothed plank,
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
New rubb'd with balm, expatiate, and confer
Their state affairs. So thick the aery croud
Swarm'd and were straiten'd ; till, the signal giv'n,
(Behold a wonder !) they but now who seem'd
In bigness to surpass earth's giant sons,
Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
Throng numberless ; like that pygmean race
Beyond the Indian mount, or faery elves,

Whose midnight revels, by a forest side
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while over-head the moon
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth
Wheels her pale course; they, on their mirth and dance
Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms
Reduc'd their shapes immense, and were at large,
Though without number still, amidst the hall
Of that infernal court. But far within,
And in their own dimensions like themselves,
The great Seraphic lords and Cherubim
In close recess, and secret conclave, sat,
A thousand Demi-Gods on golden seats,
Frequent and full. After short silence then,
And summons read, the great consult began.

THE END OF THE FIRST BOOK.







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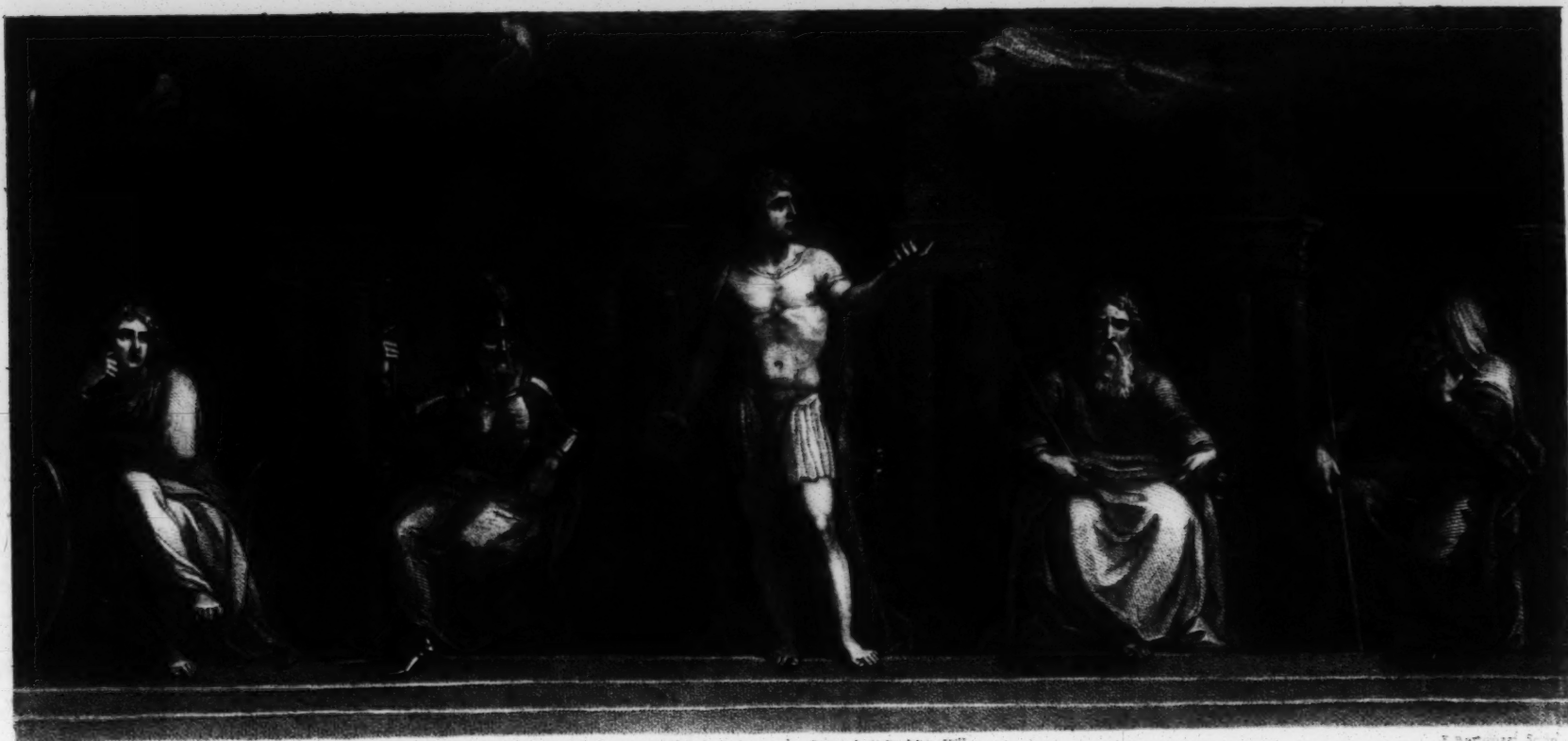
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THE
SECOND BOOK
OF
PARADISE LOST.

THE ARGUMENT.

The consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battel be to be hazarded for the recovery of Heaven. Some advise it ; others dissuade. A third proposal is preferred, mentioned before by Satan, to search the truth of that prophecy or tradition in Heaven concerning another world, and another kind of creature (equal, or not much inferior, to themselves), about this time to be created : their doubt who shall be sent on this difficult search : Satan, their chief, undertakes alone the voyage, is honored and applauded. The council thus ended, the rest betake them several ways, and to several employments, as their inclinations lead them, to entertain the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to Hell gates, finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them, by whom at length they are opened, and discover to him the great gulf between Hell and Heaven ; with what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the Power of that place, to the sight of this new world which he sought.



PARADISE LOST.

BOOK II.

HIGH on a throne of royal state, which far
 Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
 Or where the gorgeous East, with richest hand,
 Show'rs on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
 Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd
 To that bad eminence; and, from despair
 Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
 Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue
 Vain war with Heav'n; and, by success untaught,
 His proud imaginations thus display'd.

Pow'rs and Dominions, Deities of Heav'n!
 For, since no deep within her gulf can hold
 Immortal vigor, though oppress'd and fall'n,
 I give not Heav'n for lost: from this descent
 Celestial virtues rising, will appear

More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
And trust themselves to fear no second fate.
Me though just right, and the fix'd laws of Heav'n,
Did first create your leader; next, free choice;
With what besides, in counsel or in fight,
Hath been achiev'd of merit; yet this loss,
Thus far at least recover'd, hath much more
Establish'd in a safe, unenvy'd throne,
Yielded with full consent. The happier state
In Heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw
Envy from each inferior; but who here
Will envy whom the highest place exposes
Foremost to stand against the Thund'rer's aim,
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
Of endless pain? where there is then no good
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
From faction; for none sure will claim in Hell
Precedence; none, whose portion is so small
Of present pain, that with ambitious mind
Will covet more. With this advantage then
To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
More than can be in Heav'n, we now return
To claim our just inheritance of old,
Surer to prosper than prosperity
Could have assur'd us; and by what best way,
Whether of open war or covert guile,
We now debate: who can advise, may speak.

He ceas'd; and next him Moloch, scepter'd king,
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest Spirit

That fought in Heav'n, now fiercer by despair:
His trust was with th' Eternal to be deem'd
Equal in strength; and, rather than be less,
Car'd not to be at all; with that care lost
Went all his fear: of God, or Hell, or worse,
He reck'd not; and these words thereafter spake.

My sentence is for open war: of wiles,
More unexpert, I boast not: them let those
Contrive who need, or when they need, not now.
For, while they sit contriving, shall the rest,
Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait
The signal to ascend, sit ling'ring here,
Heav'n's fugitives, and for their dwelling-place
Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,
The prison of his tyranny who reigns
By our delay? no! let us rather choose,
Arm'd with Hell flames and fury, all at once
O'er Heav'n's high tow'rs to force resistless way,
Turning our tortures into horrid arms
Against the torturer; when to meet the noise
Of his almighty engine he shall hear
Infernal thunder; and for light'ning see
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
Among his Angels, and his throne itself
Mix'd with Tartarean sulphur, and strange fire,
His own invented torments. But, perhaps,
The way seems difficult and steep to scale,
With upright wing, against a higher foe.
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench

Of that forgetful lake benumb not still,
That in our proper motion we ascend
Up to our native seat: descent and fall
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
Insulting, and pursu'd us through the deep,
With what compulsion and laborious flight
We sunk thus low? Th' ascent is easy then;
Th' event is fear'd: should we again provoke
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
To our destruction; if there be in Hell
Fear to be worse destroy'd. What can be worse
Than to dwell here, driv'n out from bliss, condemn'd
In this abhorred deep to utter woe;
Where pain of unextinguishable fire
Must exercise us, without hope of end,
The vassals of his anger, when the scourge
Inexorable, and the torturing hour,
Calls us to penance? More destroy'd than thus,
We should be quite abolish'd, and expire.
What fear we then? what doubt we to incense
His utmost ire? which, to the highth enrag'd,
Will either quite consume us, and reduce
To nothing this essential; happier far,
Than mis'able to have eternal being:
Or, if our substance be indeed divine,
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst
On this side nothing; and by proof we feel
Our pow'r sufficient to disturb his Heav'n,
And with perpetual inrodes to alarm,

Though inaccessible, his fatal throne;
Which, if not victory, is yet revenge.

He ended frowning; and his look denounc'd
Desp'rate revenge, and battel dangerous
To less than Gods. On th' other side up-rose
Belial, in act more graceful and humane:
A fairer person lost not Heav'n; he seem'd
For dignity compos'd and high exploit:
But all was false and hollow; though his tongue
Dropp'd manna, and could make the worse appear
The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest counsels: for his thoughts were low;
To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
Tim'rous and slothful: yet he pleas'd the ear,
And with persuasive accent thus began.

I should be much for open war, O Peers,
As not behind in hate, if what was urg'd
Main reason to persuade immediate war,
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole success;
When he who most excels in fact of arms,
In what he counsels and in what excels
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair
And utter dissolution, as the scope
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.
First, what revenge? the tow'rs of Heav'n are fill'd
With armed watch, that render all access
Impregnable; oft on the bord'ring deep

Encamp their legions, or with obscure wing
Scout far and wide into the realm of night,
Scorning surprize. Or, could we break our way
By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise
With blackest insurrection, to confound
Heav'n's purest light; yet our great enemy,
All incorruptible, would on his throne
Sit unpolluted; and th' ethereal mould,
Incapable of stain, would soon expel
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,
Victorious. Thus repuls'd, our final hope
Is flat despair: we must exasperate
Th' almighty victor to spend all his rage;
And that must end us; that must be our cure,
To be no more; sad cure! for who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
To perish rather, swallow'd up and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated night,
Devoid of sense and motion? and who knows,
Let this be good, whether our angry foe
Can give it, or will ever? how he can,
Is doubtful; that he never will, is sure.
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire,
Belike through impotence, or unaware,
To give his enemies their wish, and end
Them in his anger, whom his anger saves
To punish endless? ---- Wherefore cease we then?
(Say they who counsel war) we are decreed,
Reserv'd, and destin'd, to eternal woe:

Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
What can we suffer worse?-----Is this then worst,
Thus fitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
What! when we fled amain, pursu'd and struck
With Heav'n's afflicting thunder, and besought
The deep to shelter us? this Hell then seem'd
A refuge from those wounds: or when we lay
Chain'd on the burning lake? that sure was worse.
What if the breath that kindled those grim fires,
Awak'd, should blow them into sev'nfold rage,
And plunge us in the flames? or, from above,
Should intermitted vengeance arm again
His red right hand to plague us? what if all
Her stores were open'd, and this firmament
Of Hell should spout her cataracts of fire,
Impendent horrors, threat'ning hideous fall
One day upon our heads; while we, perhaps,
Designing or exhorting glorious war,
Caught in a fiery tempest, shall be hurl'd
Each on his rock transfix'd, the sport and prey
Of racking whirlwinds; or for ever sunk
Under yon boiling ocean, wrapp'd in chains;
There to converse with everlasting groans,
Unrespited, unpity'd, unrepriev'd,
Ages of hopeless end? this would be worse.
War therefore, open or conceal'd, alike
My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile
With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
Views all things at one view? He, from Heav'n's highth,
All these our motions vain sees and derides;

Not more almighty to resist our might,
Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.
Shall we then live thus vile, the race of Heav'n,
Thus trampled, thus expell'd, to suffer here
Chains and these torments? better these than worse,
By my advice; since fate inevitable
Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,
The victor's will. To suffer, as to do,
Our strength is equal; nor the law unjust
That so ordains: this was at first resolv'd,
If we were wise, against so great a foe
Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.
I laugh, when those who at the spear are bold
And vent'rous, if that fail them, shrink and fear,
What yet they know must follow, to endure
Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain;
The sentence of their conqueror: this is now
Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,
Our supreme foe in time may much remit
His anger, and perhaps, thus far remov'd,
Not mind us not offending, satisfy'd
With what is punish'd; whence these raging fires
Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.
Our purer essence then will overcome
Their noxious vapor; or, inur'd, not feel;
Or, chang'd at length, and to the place conform'd
In temper and in nature, will receive
Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain:
This horror will grow mild, this darkness light;
Besides what hope the never-ending flight

Of future days may bring, what chance, what change,
Worth waiting, since our present lot appears
For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,
If we procure not to ourselves more woe.

Thus Belial, with words cloth'd in reason's garb,
Counsel'd ignoble ease, and peaceful sloth,
Not peace; and, after him, thus Mammon spake.

Either to disenthroned the king of Heav'n
We war, if war be best, or to regain
Our own right lost: him to unthroned we then
May hope, when everlasting fate shall yield
To fickle chance, and Chaos judge the strife:
The former, vain to hope, argues as vain
The latter; for what place can be for us
Within Heav'n's bound, unless Heav'n's Lord supreme
We overpower? Suppose he should relent,
And publish grace to all, on promise made
Of new subjection; with what eyes could we
Stand in his presence humble, and receive
Strict laws impos'd, to celebrate his throne
With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing
Forc'd hallelujahs; while he lordly sits
Our envy'd sovran, and his altar breathes
Ambrosial odors and ambrosial flow'rs,
Our servile off'rings? This must be our task
In Heav'n, this our delight: how wearisome
Eternity so spent in worship paid
To whom we hate! Let us not then pursue,

By force impossible, by leave obtain'd
Unacceptable, though in Heav'n, our state
Of splendid vassalage; but rather seek
Our own good from ourselves, and from our own
Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,
Free, and to none accountable, preferring
Hard liberty before the easy yoke
Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse,
We can create, and in what place so-e'er
Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain
Through labor and endurance. This deep world
Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst
Thick clouds and dark doth Heav'n's all-ruling Sire
Choose to reside, his glory unobscur'd;
And with the majesty of darkness round
Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders roar,
Must'ring their rage, and Heav'n resembles Hell!
As he our darkness, cannot we his light
Imitate when we please? This desert soil
Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold;
Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
Magnificence; and what can Heav'n show more?
Our torments also may, in length of time,
Become our elements; these piercing fires
As soft as now severe, our temper chang'd
Into their temper; which must needs remove
The sensible of pain. All things invite
To peaceful counsels, and the settled state

Of order; how in safety best we may
Compose our present evils, with regard
Of what we are and were, dismissing quite
All thoughts of war. Ye have what I advise.

He scarce had finish'd, when such murmur fill'd
Th' assembly, as when hollow rocks retain
The found of blust'ring winds, which all night long
Had rous'd the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
Sea-faring men o'erwatch'd, whose bark by chance,
Or pinnacle, anchors in a craggy bay
After the tempest: such applause was heard
As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleas'd,
Advising peace: for such another field
They dreaded worse than Hell; so much the fear
Of thunder and the sword of Michael
Wrought still within them; and no less desire
To found this nether empire, which might rise
By policy, and long process of time,
In emulation opposite to Heav'n.
Which when Beëlzebub perceiv'd (than whom,
Satan except, none higher sat), with grave
Aspect he rose; and in his rising seem'd
A pillar of state: deep on his front engraven
Deliberation sat and public care;
And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
Majestic though in ruin: sage he stood,
With Atlantéan shoulders fit to bear
The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look

Drew audience and attention still as night
Or summer's noon-tide air, while thus he spake.

Thrones and imperial Pow'rs, offspring of Heav'n,
Ethereal Virtues! or these titles now
Must we renounce, and, changing style, be call'd
Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote
Inclines, here to continue, and build up here
A growing empire; doubtless! while we dream,
And know not that the King of Heav'n hath doom'd
This place our dungeon; not our safe retreat
Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
From Heav'n's high jurisdiction, in new league
Banded against his throne; but to remain
In strictest bondage, though thus far remov'd,
Under th' inevitable curb, reserv'd
His captive multitude: for he, be sure,
In highth or depth, still first and last will reign
Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part
By our revolt, but over Hell extend
His empire, and with iron scepter rule
Us here, as, with his golden, those in Heav'n.
What fit we then projecting peace and war?
War hath determin'd us, and foil'd with loss
Irreparable; terms of peace yet none
Vouchsaf'd or fought; for what peace will be giv'n
To us enslav'd, but custody severe,
And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
Inflicted? and what peace can we return,

But, to our pow'r, hostility and hate,
Untam'd reluctance, and revenge, though slow,
Yet ever plotting how the conqu'ror least
May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
In doing what we most in suff'ring feel?
Nor will occasion want; nor shall we need,
With dang'rous expedition, to invade
Heav'n, whose high walls fear no assault, or siege,
Or ambush from the deep. What if we find
Some easier enterprize? There is a place
(If ancient and prophetic fame in Heav'n
Err not), another world, the happy seat
Of some new race call'd Man, about this time
To be created like to us, though less
In pow'r and excellence, but favor'd more
Of him who rules above: so was his will
Pronounc'd among the Gods, and by an oath,
That shook Heav'n's whole circumference, confirm'd.
Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
What creatures there inhabit; of what mould
Or substance; how endu'd; and what their pow'r,
And where their weakness; how attempted best,
By force or subtilty. Though Heav'n be shut,
And Heav'n's high arbitrator sit secure
In his own strength, this place may lie expos'd,
The utmost border of his kingdom, left
To their defense who hold it: here perhaps
Some advantageous act may be achiev'd
By sudden onset; either with Hell fire
To waste his whole creation, or possess

All as our own, and drive, as we were driv'n,
The puny habitants; or, if not drive,
Seduce them to our party, that their God
May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
Abolish his own works. This would surpass
Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
In our confusion, and our joy up-raise
In his disturbance; when his darling sons,
Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse
Their frail original, and faded bliss;
Faded so soon! Advise if this be worth
Attempting, or to sit in darkness here
Hatching vain empires.----Thus Beëlzebub
Pleaded his dev'lish counsel, first devis'd
By Satan, and in part propos'd: for whence,
But from the author of all ill, could spring
So deep a malice, to confound the race
Of mankind in one root, and Earth with Hell
To mingle and involve, done all to spite
The great Creator? but their spite still serves
His glory to augment. The bold design
Pleas'd highly those infernal states, and joy
Sparkled in all their eyes: with full assent
They vote; whereat his speech he thus renews.

Well have ye judg'd, well ended long debate,
Synod of Gods; and, like to what ye are,
Great things resolv'd; which from the lowest deep
Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
Nearer our ancient seat; perhaps in view

Of those bright confines, whence with neighb'ring arms,
And opportune excursion, we may chance
Re-enter Heav'n; or else in some mild zone
Dwell, not unvisited of Heav'n's fair light,
Secure, and at the bright'ning orient beam
Purge off this gloom: the soft delicious air,
To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,
Shall breathe her balm. But first whom shall we send
In search of this new world? whom shall we find
Sufficient? who shall tempt with wand'ring feet
The dark, unbottom'd, infinite abyfs,
And through the palpable obscure find out
His uncouth way; or spread his aery flight,
Up-borne with indefatigable wings,
Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive
The happy isle? what strength, what art, can then
Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe
Through the strict senteries and stations thick
Of Angels watching round? Here he had need
All circumspection, and we now no less
Choice in our suffrage; for, on whom we send,
The weight of all, and our last hope, relies.

This said, he sat; and expectation held
His look suspense, awaiting who appear'd
To second, or oppose, or undertake
The perilous attempt: but all sat mute,
Pond'ring the danger with deep thoughts; and each
In other's count'nance read his own dismay,
Astonish'd: none, among the choice and prime

Of those Heav'n-warring champions, could be found
So hardy, as to proffer or accept,
Alone, the dreadful voyage; till at last
Satan, whom now transcendent glory rais'd
Above his fellows, with monarchal pride,
Conscious of highest worth, unmov'd thus spake.

O Progeny of Heav'n, empyreal Thrones!
With reason hath deep silence and demur
Seis'd us, though undismay'd: long is the way
And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light;
Our prison strong; this huge convèx of fire,
Outrageous to devour, immures us round
Ninefold; and gates of burning adamant,
Barr'd over us, prohibit all egress.
These pass'd, if any pass, the void profound
Of unessential Night receives him next,
Wide gaping; and with utter loss of being
Threatens him, plung'd in that abortive gulf.
If thence he 'scape into whatever world,
Or unknown region, what remains him less
Than unknown dangers and as hard escape?
But I should ill become this throne, O Peers,
And this imperial sovranty, adorn'd
With splendor, arm'd with pow'r, if aught propos'd
And judg'd of public moment, in the shape
Of difficulty, or danger, could deter
Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume
These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
Refusing to accept as great a share

Of hazard as of honor ; due alike
To him who reigns ; and so much to him due
Of hazard more, as he above the rest
High honor'd fits ? Go therefore, mighty Pow'rs !
Terror of Heav'n, though fall'n ! intend at home,
While here shall be our home, what best may ease
The present misery, and render Hell
More tol'able ; if there be cure or charm
To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain
Of this ill mansion. Intermit no watch
Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad,
Through all the coasts of dark destruction, seek
Deliv'rance for us all. This enterprize
None shall partake with me.----Thus saying, rose
The monarch, and prevented all reply ;
Prudent, lest, from his resolution rais'd,
Others among the chief might offer now
(Certain to be refus'd) what erst they fear'd ;
And, so refus'd, might in opinion stand
His rivals, winning cheap the high repute
Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
Dreaded not more th' adventure than his voice
Forbidding ; and at once with him they rose :
Their rising all at once was as the sound
Of thunder heard remote. Tow'ards him they bend
With awful rev'rence prone ; and, as a God,
Extol him, equal to the high't in Heav'n :
Nor fail'd they to express how much they prais'd,
That, for the gen'ral safety, he despis'd
His own : for neither do the Spirits damn'd

Lose all their virtue ; left bad men should boast
Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites,
Or close ambition, varnish'd o'er with zeal.
Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
Ended, rejoicing in their matchless chief :
As, when from mountain tops the dusky clouds
Ascending, while the north wind sleeps, o'er-spread
Heav'n's cheerful face ; the lowring element
Scowls o'er the darken'd landscape snow or show'r ;
If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet
Extend his ev'ning beam, the fields revive,
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.
Oh shame to men ! devil with devil damn'd
Firm concord holds ; men only disagree
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heav'nly grace ; and, God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife,
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy ;
As if (which might induce us to accord)
Man had not hellish foes enow besides,
That, day and night, for his destruction wait.

The Stygian council thus dissolv'd ; and forth
In order came the grand infernal peers :
Midst came their mighty paramount, and seem'd
Alone th' antagonist of Heav'n, nor less
Than Hell's dread emperor with pomp supreme,
And God-like imitated state : him round

A globe of fiery Seraphim enclos'd,
With bright emblazonry, and horrent arms.
Then of their fession ended they bid cry,
With trumpets' regal found, the great result:
Tow'rd the four winds four speedy Cherubim
Put to their mouths the founding alchemy,
By heralds' voice explain'd: the hollow abyfs
Heard far and wide; and all the host of Hell,
With deaf'ning shout, return'd them loud acclaim.

Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat rais'd
By false presumptuous hope, the ranged Pow'rs
Disband; and, wand'ring, each his sev'ral way
Pursues, as inclination, or sad choice,
Leads him perplex'd, where he may likeliest find
Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
The irksome hours, till his great chief return.
Part on the plain, or in the air sublime,
Upon the wing, or in swift race, contend,
As at th' Olympian games or Pythian fields;
Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
With rapid wheels, or fronted brigads form:
As, when, to warn proud cities, war appears
Wag'd in the troubled sky, and armies rush
To battel in the clouds, before each van
Prick forth the aery knights, and couch their spears,
Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms,
From either end of Heav'n, the welkin burns.
Others, with vast Typhœan rage, more fell,
Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air

In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wild uproar:
As when Alcides, from Oechalia crown'd
With conquest, felt th' envenom'd robe, and tore
Through pain up by the roots Theſſalian pines,
And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw
Into th' Euboïc ſea. Others, more mild,
Retreated in a ſilent valley, ſing,
With notes angelical, to many a harp,
Their own heroic deeds, and hapleſs fall
By doom of battel; and complain that fate
Free virtue ſhould inthrall to force or chance.
Their ſong was partial; but the harmony
(What could it leſs when Spirits immortal ſing?)
Suspended Hell, and took with raviſhment
The thronging audience. In diſcourſe more ſweet
(For eloquence the ſoul, ſong charms the ſenſe),
Others apart ſat on a hill retir'd,
In thoughts more elevate; and reaſon'd high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate;
Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge abſolute;
And found no end, in wand'ring mazes loſt.
Of good and evil much they argu'd then,
Of happineſs and final miſery,
Paſſion and apathy, and glory and ſhame;
Vain wiſdom all, and falſe philoſophy;
Yet, with a pleaſing forcery, could charm
Pain for a while, or anguiſh, and excite
Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured breaſt
With ſtubborn patience, as with triple ſteel.
Another part, in ſquadrons and groſs bands,

On bold adventure to discover wide
That dismal world, if any clime perhaps
Might yield them easier habitation, bend
Four ways their flying march, along the banks
Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge
Into the burning lake their baleful streams;
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;
Sad Acheron, of sorrow, black and deep;
Cocytus, nam'd of lamentation loud
Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegethon,
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
Far off from these, a flow and silent stream,
Lethé, the river of oblivion, rolls
Her wat'ry labyrinth; whereof who drinks,
Forthwith his former state and being forgets,
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
Beyond this flood, a frozen continent
Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
Of whirlwind, and dire hail, which on firm land
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems
Of ancient pile; all else deep snow and ice,
A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog
Betwixt Damietta and mount Casius old,
Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air
Burns froze, and cold performs th' effect of fire.
Thither, by harpy-footed furies hal'd,
At certain revolutions all the damn'd
Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change
Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce;
From beds of raging fire to starve in ice
Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine,

Immoveable, infix'd, and frozen round,
Periods of time; thence hurry'd back to fire.
They ferry over this Lethéan found
Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment,
And with and struggle, as they pass, to reach
The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,
All in one moment, and so near the brink:
But fate withstands; and, to oppose th' attempt,
Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards
The ford; and, of itself, the water flies
All taste of living wight, as once it fled
The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on
In cónfus'd march forlorn, th' advent'rous bands,
With shudd'ring horror pale, and eyes aghast,
View'd first their lamentable lot, and found
No rest: through many a dark and dreary vale
They pass'd, and many a region dolorous;
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp;
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death;
An universe of death, which God by curse
Created evil, for evil only good;
Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, inutt'able, and worse
Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,
Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimæras dire.

Mean-while, the adversary of God and man,
Satan, with thoughts inflam'd of high'st design,
Puts on swift wings, and tow'rd the gates of Hell

Explores his solitary flight: sometimes
He scours the right-hand coast, sometimes the left;
Now shaves with level wing the deep; then soars
Up to the fiery concave, tow'ring high:
As when far off at sea a fleet descry'd
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
Their spicy drugs; they on the trading flood,
Through the wide Ethiopian, to the Cape
Ply, stemming nightly tow'rd the pole: so seem'd
Far off the flying Fiend. At last appear
Hell bounds, high reaching to the horrid roof,
And thrice three-fold the gates; three folds were bras,
Three iron, three of adamantine rock,
Impenetrable, impal'd with circling fire,
Yet unconsum'd. Before the gates there sat,
On either side, a formidable shape.
The one seem'd woman to the waist, and fair;
But ended foul in many a scaly fold,
Voluminous and vast, a serpent arm'd
With mortal sting: about her middle round,
A cry of Hell hounds never ceasing bark'd
With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung
A hideous peal; yet, when they list, would creep,
If aught disturb'd their noise, into her womb,
And kennel there; yet there still bark'd and howl'd
Within, unseen. Far less abhorr'd than these
Vex'd Scylla, bathing in the sea that parts
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore;

Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when, call'd
In secret, riding through the air she comes,
Lur'd with the smell of infant blood, to dance
With Lapland witches, while the lab'ring moon
Eclipses at their charms. The other shape
(If shape it might be call'd that shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd;
For each seem'd either); black it stood as night,
Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,
And shook a dreadful dart: what seem'd his head
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
Satan was now at hand; and from his seat
The monster moving onward came as fast,
With horrid strides; Hell trembled as he strode.
Th' undaunted Fiend what this might be admir'd;
Admir'd, not fear'd (God and his Son except,
Created thing naught valu'd he nor shunn'd);
And, with disdainful look, thus first began.

Whence and what art thou, execrable shape,
That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance
Thy miscreated front athwart my way
To yonder gates? through them I mean to pass,
That be assur'd, without leave ask'd of thee.
Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,
Hell-born, not to contend with Spirits of Heav'n.

To whom the goblin, full of wrath, reply'd.
Art thou that traitor Angel, art thou he,

Who first broke peace in Heav'n and faith, till then
Unbroken, and in proud rebellious arms
Drew after him the third part of Heav'n's fons
Conjúr'd against the High't; for which both thou
And they, outcast from God, are here condemn'd
To waste eternal days in woe and pain?
And reckon't thou thyself with Spirits of Heav'n,
Hell-doom'd, and breath't defiance here and scorn,
Where I reign king, and, to enrage thee more,
Thy king and lord? Back to thy punishment,
False fugitive, and to thy speed add wings,
Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue
Thy ling'ring, or with one stroke of this dart
Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before.

So spake the grisly Terror; and in shape,
So speaking and so threat'ning, grew ten-fold
More dreadful and deform. On th' other side,
Incens'd with indignation, Satan stood
Unterrify'd, and like a comet burn'd,
That fires the length of Ophiüchus huge
In th' Arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
Level'd his deadly aim; their fatal hands
No second stroke intend; and such a frown
Each cast at th' other, as when two black clouds,
With Heav'n's artill'ry fraught, come rattling on
Over the Caspian, then stand front to front,
Hov'ring a space, till winds the signal blow
To join their dark encounter in mid air:

So frown'd the mighty combatants, that Hell
Grew darker at their frown; so match'd they stood;
For never but once more was either like
To meet so great a foe: and now great deeds
Had been achiev'd, whereof all Hell had rung,
Had not the snaky forcerefs that sat
Fast by Hell gate, and kept the fatal key,
Ris'n, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.

O Father, what intends thy hand, she cry'd,
Against thy only son? What fury, O Son,
Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart
Against thy father's head? and know'st for whom;
For him who sits above, and laughs the while
At thee ordain'd his drudge, to execute
Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids;
His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both.

She spake; and, at her words, the hellish pest
Forbore; then these to her Satan return'd.

So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand,
Prevented, spares to tell thee yet by deeds
What it intends; till first I know of thee,
What thing thou art, thus double-form'd, and why,
In this infernal vale first met, thou call'st
Me Father, and that phantasm call'st my Son.
I know thee not; nor ever saw till now
Sight more detestable than him and thee.

To whom thus the portress of Hell gate reply'd.
Hast thou forgot me then? and do I seem
Now in thine eye so foul? once deem'd so fair
In Heav'n, when at th' assembly, and in sight
Of all the Seraphim with thee combin'd
In bold conspiracy against Heav'n's King,
All on a sudden miserable pain
Surpris'd thee; dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum
In darkness; while thy head flames thick and fast
Threw forth; till, on the left side op'ning wide,
Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,
Then shining heav'nly fair, a Goddess arm'd
Out of thy head I sprung! Amazement seis'd
All th' host of Heav'n: back they recoil'd affraid
At first, and call'd me SIN, and for a sign
Portentous held me; but, familiar grown,
I pleas'd, and with attractive graces won
The most averse; thee chiefly, who, full oft
Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing,
Becam'st enamor'd; and such joy thou took'st
With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd
A growing burthen. Mean-while war arose,
And fields were fought in Heav'n; wherein remain'd
(For what could else?) to our Almighty foe
Clear victory; to our part, loss and rout
Through all the empyrean: down they fell,
Driv'n headlong from the pitch of Heaven, down
Into this deep; and, in the gen'ral fall,
I also; at which time this pow'rful key
Into my hand was giv'n, with charge to keep

These gates for ever shut, which none can pass
Without my op'ning. Pensive here I sat
Alone, but long I sat not, till my womb,
Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown,
Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes.
At last this odious offspring whom thou seest,
Thine own begotten, breaking violent way,
Tore through my entrails, that, with fear and pain
Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
Transform'd: but he, my inbred enemy,
Forth issu'd, brandishing his fatal dart
Made to destroy. I fled, and cry'd out DEATH:
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
From all her caves, and back refounded DEATH.
I fled; but he pursu'd (though more, it seems,
Inflam'd with lust than rage), and, swifter far,
Me overtook his mother, all dismay'd;
And, in embraces forcible and foul
Engend'ring with me, of that rape begot
These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry
Surround me, as thou saw'st; hourly conceiv'd,
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
To me; for, when they list, into the womb
That bred them they return, and howl, and gnaw
My bowels, their repast; then, bursting forth
Afresh, with conscious terrors vex me round,
That rest or intermission none I find.
Before mine eyes in opposition sits
Grim Death, my son and foe; who sets them on,
And me his parent would full soon devour,

For want of other prey, but that he knows
His end with mine involv'd, and knows that I
Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,
Whenever that shall be; so fate pronounc'd.
But thou, O Father, I forewarn thee, shun
His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
To be invuln'able in those bright arms,
Though temper'd heav'nly; for that mortal dint,
Save he who reigns above, none can resist.

She finish'd; and the subtle Fiend his lore
Soon learn'd, now milder, and thus answer'd smooth.

Dear Daughter, since thou claim'st me for thy fire,
And my fair son here show'st me (the dear pledge
Of dalliance had with thee in Heav'n, and joys
Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change
Befall'n us, unforeseen, unthought of); know
I come no enemy, but to set free,
From out this dark and dismal house of pain,
Both him and thee, and all the heav'nly host
Of Spirits, that, in our just pretences arm'd,
Fell with us from on high. From them I go
This uncouth errand sole, and one for all
Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread
Th' unfounded deep, and through the void immense
To search with wand'ring quest a place foretold
Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
Created, vast and round; a place of bliss
In the purlieus of Heav'n; and therein plac'd

A race of upstart creatures, to supply
Perhaps our vacant room, though more remov'd,
Left Heav'n, furcharg'd with potent multitude,
Might hap to move new broils. Be this, or aught
Than this more secret, now design'd, I haste
To know; and, this once known, shall soon return,
And bring ye to the place where thou and Death
Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
Wing silently the buxom air, embalm'd
With odors: there ye shall be fed and fill'd
Immeasurably; all things shall be your prey.

He ceas'd; for both seem'd highly pleas'd; and Death
Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile, to hear
His famine should be fill'd, and blest'd his maw
Destin'd to that good hour: no less rejoic'd
His mother bad, and thus bespake her fire.

The key of this infernal pit by due,
And by command of Heav'n's all-pow'rful King,
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock
These adamantine gates: against all force
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
Fearless to be o'ermatch'd by living might.
But what owe I to his commands above
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
To sit in hateful office here confin'd,
Inhabitant of Heav'n, and heav'nly-born,
Here in perpetual agony and pain,

With terrors and with clamors compass'd round
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?
Thou art my father, thou my author; thou
My being gav'st me; whom should I obey
But thee, whom follow? thou wilt bring me soon
To that new world of light and bliss, among
The Gods who live at ease, where I shall reign
At thy right hand voluptuous, as befits
Thy daughter and thy darling, without end.

Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;
And, tow'rs the gate rolling her bestial train,
Forthwith the huge portcullis high up drew,
Which, but herself, not all the Stygian pow'rs
Could once have mov'd; then in the key-hole turns
Th' intricate wards, and ev'ry bolt and bar
Of massy iron, or solid rock, with ease
Unfastens: on a sudden open fly,
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,
Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus. She open'd; but to shut
Excell'd her pow'r: the gates wide open stood,
That, with extended wings, a banner'd host,
Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through,
With horse and chariots rank'd in loose array;
So wide they stood, and, like a furnace-mouth,
Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.
Before their eyes, in sudden view, appear

The secrets of the hoary deep; a dark
Illimitable ocean, without bound,
Without dimension; where length, breadth, and highth,
And time, and place, are lost; where eldest Night
And Chaos, ancestors of nature, hold
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.
For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce,
Strive here for mastery, and to battle bring
Their embryon atoms. They around the flag
Of each his faction, in their several clans,
Light-arm'd or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift or slow,
Swarm populous, un-number'd as the sands
Of Barca or Cyrené's torrid soil,
Levy'd to side with warring winds, and poise
Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,
He rules a moment: Chaos umpire sits,
And by decision more embroils the fray
By which he reigns: next him high arbiter
Chance governs all. Into this wild abyss
(The womb of nature, and perhaps her grave,
Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
But all these in their pregnant causes mix'd
Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,
Unless th' Almighty Maker them ordain
His dark materials to create more worlds);
Into this wild abyss the wary Fiend
Stood on the brink of Hell and look'd a while,
Pond'ring his voyage; for no narrow frith
He had to cross. Nor was his ear less peal'd

With noises loud and ruinous (to compare
Great things with small), than when Bellona storms
With all her batt'ring engines bent to rase
Some capital city; or less than if this frame
Of Heav'n were falling, and these elements
In mutiny had from her axle torn
The steadfast earth. At last his sail-broad vans
He spreads for flight, and, in the surging smoke
Up-lifted, spurns the ground; thence many a league,
As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides
Audacious; but, that feat soon failing, meets
A vast vacuity: all unawares,
Flutt'ring his pennons vain, plumb down he drops
Ten thousand fathom deep; and to this hour
Down had been falling, had not by ill chance
The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,
Instinct with fire and nitre, hurry'd him
As many miles aloft: that fury stay'd,
Quench'd in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea,
Nor good dry land; nigh founder'd, on he fares,
Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
Half flying; behoves him now both oar and sail.
As when a gryphon through the wilderness
With winged course, o'er hill or moory dale,
Pursues the Arimasbian, who by stealth
Had from his wakeful custody purloin'd
The guarded gold: so eagerly the Fiend
O'er bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way;
And swims or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies.

At length, an universal hubbub wild
Of stunning sounds and voices all confus'd,
Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear
With loudest vehemence. Thither he plies,
Undaunted, to meet there whatever Pow'r
Or Spirit of the nethermost abyfs
Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies
Bord'ring on light: when straight behold the throne
Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread
Wide on the wasteful deep; with him inthron'd
Sat fable-vested Night, eldest of things,
The consort of his reign; and by them stood
Orcus and Adés, and the dreaded name
Of Demogorgon; Rumor next and Chance,
And Tumult and Confusion all embroil'd,
And Discord with a thousand various mouths.
To whom Satan turning boldly, thus. Ye Pow'rs
And Spirits of this nethermost abyfs,
Chaos and ancient Night! I come no spy,
With purpose to explore or to disturb
The secrets of your realm; but, by constraint
Wand'ring this darksome desert, as my way
Lies through your spacious empire up to light,
Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek
What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds
Confine with Heav'n; or, if some other place,
From your dominion won, th' ethereal King
Possesses lately, thither to arrive
I travel this profound: direct my course;

Directed, no mean recompense it brings
To your behoof, if I that region lost,
All usurpation thence expell'd, reduce
To her original darkness and your sway
(Which is my present journey), and once more
Erect the standard there of ancient Night:
Your's be th' advantage all, mine the revenge.

Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old,
With falt'ring speech and visage incompas'd,
Answer'd. I know thee, stranger, who thou art;
That mighty leading Angel, who of late
Made head against Heav'n's King, though overthrown.
I saw and heard; for such a num'rous host
Fled not in silence through the frightened deep,
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
Confusion worse confounded; and Heav'n gates
Pour'd out by millions her victorious bands
Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
Keep residence; if all I can will serve
That little which is left so to defend,
Encroach'd on still through your intestine broils,
Weak'ning the scepter of old Night: first Hell,
Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath;
Now lately Heav'n and Earth, another world,
Hung o'er my realm, link'd in a golden chain
To that side Heav'n from whence your legions fell:
If that way be your walk, you have not far;
So much the nearer danger; go, and speed!
Havoc, and spoil, and ruin, are my gain.

He ceas'd; and Satan stay'd not to reply;
But, glad that now his sea should find a shore,
With fresh alacrity, and force renew'd,
Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire,
Into the wild expanse; and through the flock
Of fighting elements, on all sides round
Environ'd, wins his way; harder beset
And more endanger'd, than when Argo pass'd
Through Bosporus betwixt the jutting rocks;
Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunn'd
Charybdis, and by th' other whirlpool steer'd:
So he with difficulty and labor hard
Mov'd on; with difficulty and labor he;
But, he once past, soon after when man fell,
Strange alteration! Sin and Death, amain
Following his track (such was the will of Heav'n),
Pav'd after him a broad and beaten way
Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
Tamely endur'd a bridge of wondrous length,
From Hell continu'd, reaching th' utmost orb
Of this frail world; by which the Spirits perverse,
With easy intercourse, pass to and fro,
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
God and good Angels guard by special grace.

But now at last the sacred influence
Of light appears; and, from the walls of Heav'n,
Shoots far into the bosom of dim Night
A glimm'ring dawn: here Nature first begins
Her farthest verge; and Chaos to retire,

As from her outmost works a broken foe,
With tumult less, and with less hostile din;
That Satan with less toil, and now with ease,
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light,
And, like a weather-beaten vessel, holds
Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn;
Or in the emptier waste, resembling air,
Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
Far off th' empyreal Heav'n, extended wide
In circuit, undetermin'd square or round,
With opal tow'rs and battlements adorn'd
Of living sapphire, once his native seat;
And fast by, hanging in a golden chain,
This pendent world, in bigness as a star
Of smallest magnitude close by the moon.
Thither, full fraught with mischievous revenge,
Accurs'd, and in a curfed hour, he hies.

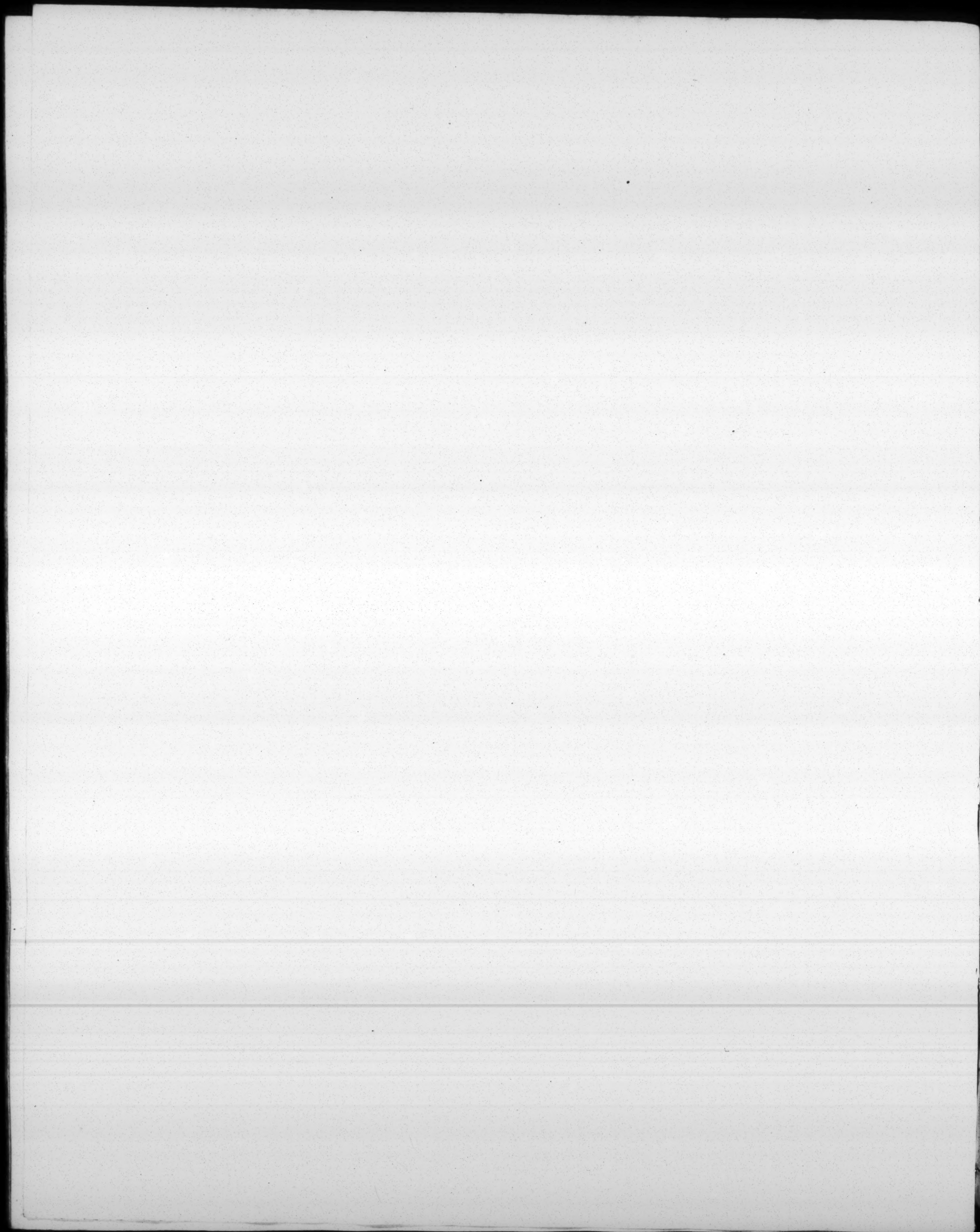
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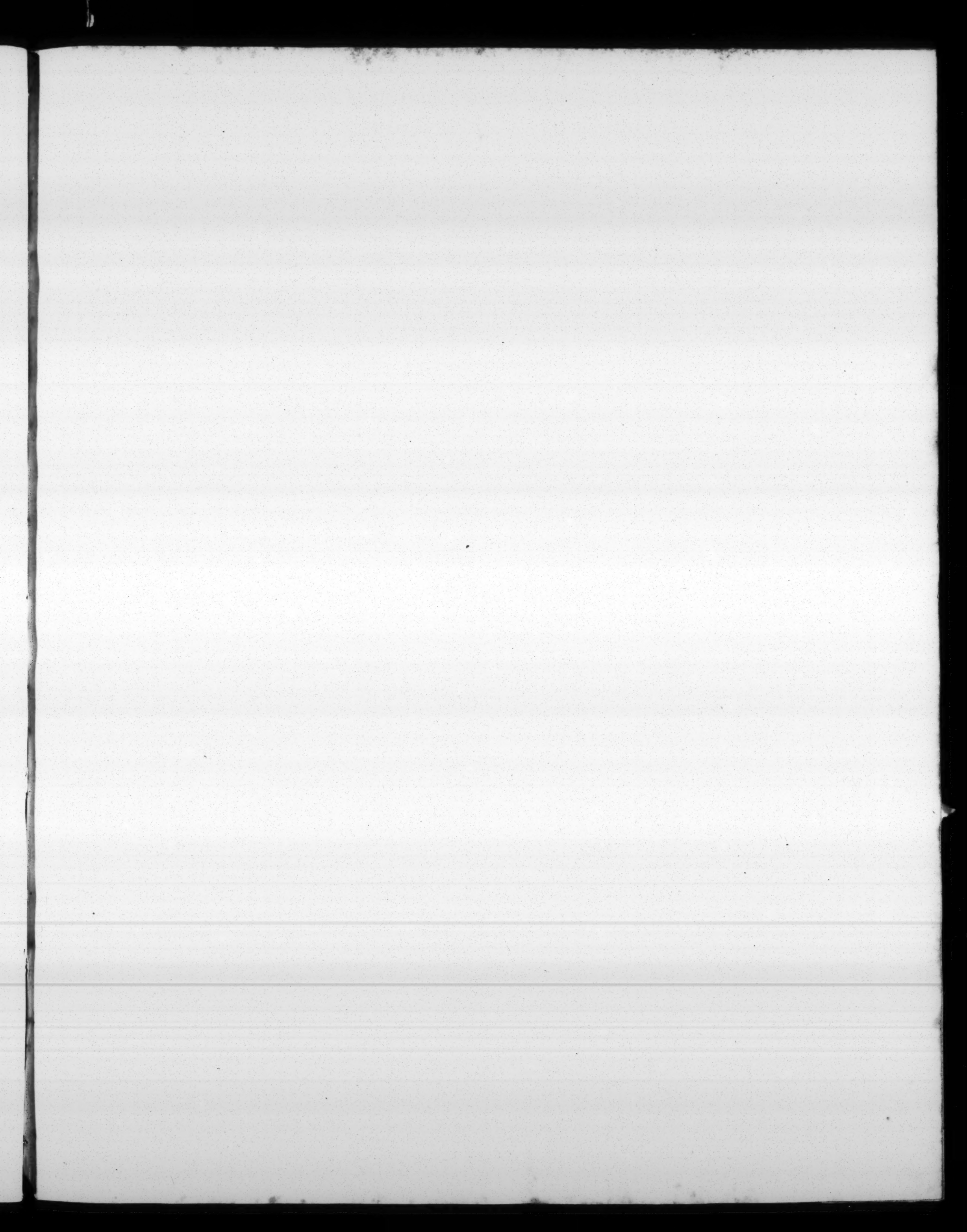


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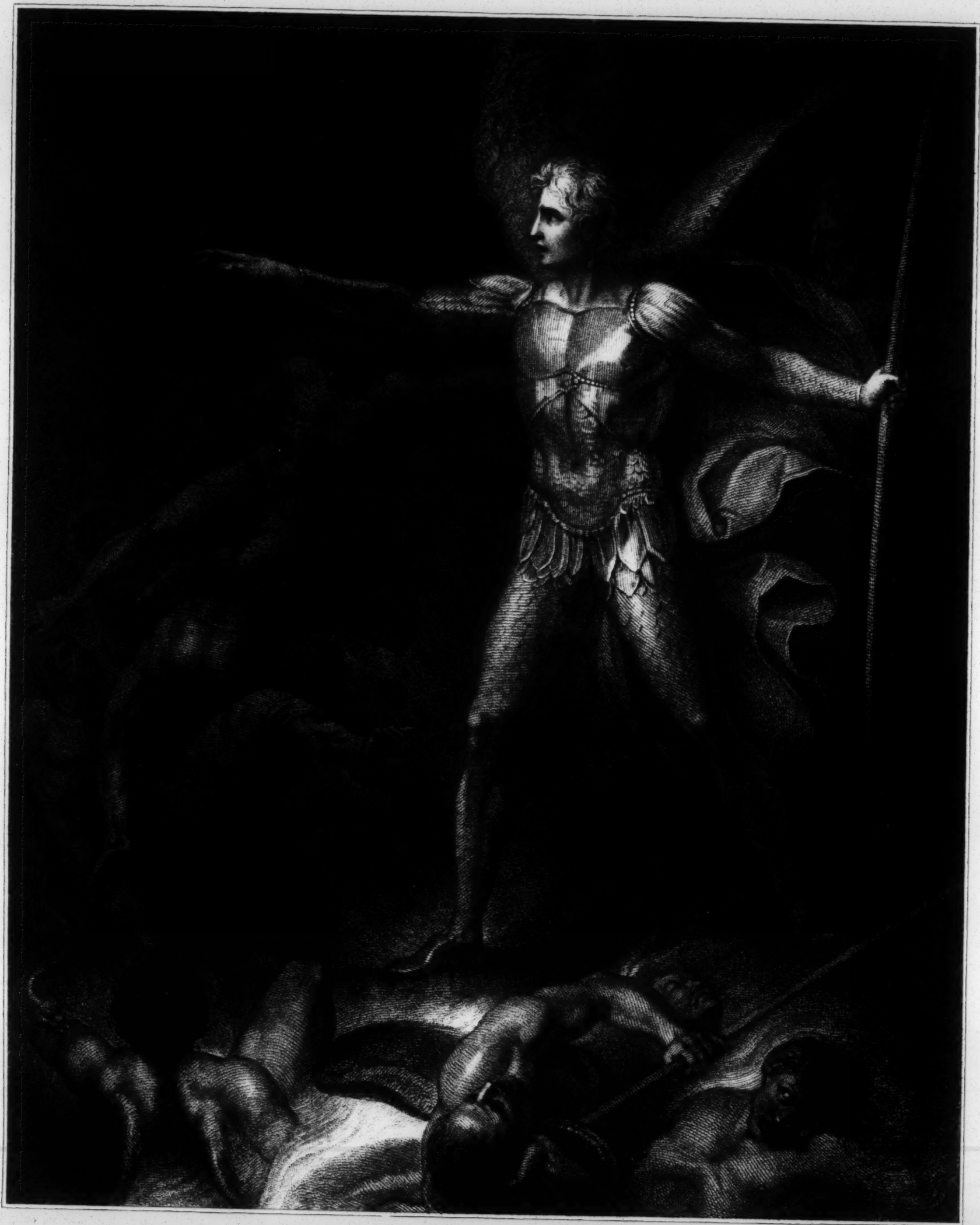
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THE
THIRD BOOK
OF
PARADISE LOST.



THE
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OF
PARADISE LOST.

THE ARGUMENT.

GOD, sitting on his throne, sees Satan flying towards this world, then newly created; shows him to the Son, who sat at his right hand; foretells the success of Satan in perverting mankind; clears his own justice and wisdom from all imputation, having created man free and able enough to have withstood his tempter; yet declares his purpose of grace towards him, in regard he fell not of his own malice, as did Satan, but by him seduced. The Son of GOD renders praises to his Father for the manifestation of his gracious purpose towards man; but GOD again declares, that grace cannot be extended towards man without the satisfaction of divine justice; man hath offended the majesty of GOD by aspiring to God-head, and therefore with all his progeny devoted to death must die, unless some one can be found sufficient to answer for his offense, and undergo his punishment. The Son of GOD freely offers himself a ransom for man: the Father accepts him, ordains his incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all names in Heaven and Earth; commands all the Angels to adore him: they obey, and, hymning to their harps in full choir, celebrate the Father and the Son. Mean-while Satan alights upon the bare convex of this world's outermost orb; where wandering he first finds a place, since called The Limbo of Vanity (what persons and things fly up thither); thence comes to the gate of Heaven, described ascending by stairs, and the waters above the firmament that flow about it: his passage thence to the orb of the sun: he finds there Uriel, the regent of that orb; but first changes himself into the shape of a meaner Angel; and, pretending a zealous desire to behold the new creation, and man whom GOD had placed here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed; alights first on mount Niphates.



PARADISE LOST.

BOOK III.

HAIL, holy Light, offspring of Heav'n first-born !
Or of th' Eternal co-eternal beam
May I express thee unblam'd ? since God is light,
And never but in unapproach'd light
Dwelt from eternity ; dwelt then in thee,
Bright effluence of bright essence increate !
Or hear'ft thou rather pure ethereal stream,
Whose fountain who shall tell ? before the sun,
Before the Heav'ns, thou wert ; and, at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest
The rising world of waters dark and deep,
Won from the void and formless infinite.
Thee I re-visit now with bolder wing,
Escap'd the Stygian pool, though long detain'd
In that obscure sojourn ; while in my flight,
Through utter and through middle darkness borne,

With other notes than to th' Orphéan lyre,
I fung of Chaos and eternal Night;
Taught by the heav'nly Muse to venture down
The dark descent, and up to re-ascend,
Though hard and rare. Thee I re-visit safe,
And feel thy sovran vital lamp; but thou
Re-visit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
So thick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs,
Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more
Cease I to wander, where the Muses haunt
Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief
Thee, Sion, and the flow'ry brooks beneath,
That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit; nor sometimes forget
Those other two equal'd with me in fate,
So were I equal'd with them in renown,
Blind Thamyras and blind Mæonides;
And Tiresias and Phineus, prophets old:
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
Sings darkling, and, in shadiest covert hid,
Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year
Seasons return; but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark,
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men

Cut off, and, for the book of knowledge fair,
Presented with an universal blank
Of Nature's works, to me expung'd and ras'd,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
So much the rather thou, celestial Light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her pow'rs
Irradiate; there plant eyes; all mist from thence
Purge and disperse; that I may see and tell
Of things invifible to mortal fight.

Now had th' Almighty Father from above,
From the pure empyréan where he fits
High thron'd above all highth, bent down his eye,
His own works and their works at once to view.
About him all the Sanctities of Heav'n
Stood thick as ftars, and from his fight receiv'd
Beatitude paff utt'rance: on his right
The radiant image of his glory fat,
His only Son. On earth he firft beheld
Our two firft parents, yet the only two
Of mankind, in the happy garden plac'd,
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
Uninterrupted joy, unrival'd love,
In blifsful folitude. He then furvey'd
Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there
Coafting the wall of Heav'n on this fide Night
In the dun air fublime, and ready now
To ftoop, with weary'd wings and willing feet,
On the bare outside of this world, that feem'd
Firm land imbofom'd, without firmament,

Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.
Him God beholding from his prospect high,
Wherein past, present, future, he beholds,
Thus to his only Son, foreseeing, spake.

Only begotten Son, see'st thou what rage
Transports our adversary? whom no bounds
Prescrib'd, no bars of Hell, nor all the chains
Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyss
Wide interrupt, can hold; so bent he seems
On desperate revenge, that shall redound
Upon his own rebellious head. And now,
Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his way
Not far off Heav'n, in the precincts of light,
Directly tow'ards the new-created world,
And man there plac'd; with purpose to assay
If him by force he can destroy, or, worse,
By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert;
For man will hearken to his glosing lyes,
And easily transgress the sole command,
Sole pledge of his obedience: so will fall
He and his faithless progeny: whose fault?
Whose but his own? Ingrate! he had of me
All he could have: I made him just and right,
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
Such I created all th' ethereal Pow'rs
And Spirits, both them who stood and them who fail'd;
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
Not free, what proof could they have giv'n sincere
Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,

Where only what they needs must do appear'd,
Not what they would? what praise could they receive,
What pleasure I, from such obedience paid,
When will and reason (reason also is choice),
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,
Made passive both, had serv'd necessity,
Not me? They therefore, as to right belong'd,
So were created; nor can justly accuse
Their maker, or their making, or their fate,
As if predestination over-rul'd
Their will, dispos'd by absolute decree
Or high fore-knowledge. They themselves decreed
Their own revolt, not I: if I fore-knew,
Fore-knowledge had no influence on their fault,
Which had no less prov'd certain unforeknown.
So, without least impulse or shadow of fate,
Or aught by me immutably foreseen,
They trespass; authors to themselves in all,
Both what they judge and what they choose; for so
I form'd them free, and free they must remain,
Till they inthrall themselves: I else must change
Their nature, and revoke the high decree,
Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd
Their freedom; they themselves ordain'd their fall.
The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
Self-tempted, self-deprav'd: man falls, deceiv'd
By th' other first: man therefore shall find grace;
The other none. In mercy and justice both,
Through Heav'n and Earth, so shall my glory excel;
But mercy, first and last, shall brightest shine.

Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd
All Heav'n, and in the blessed Spirits elect
Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd.
Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
Most glorious: in him all his Father shone
Substantially express'd; and in his face
Divine compassion visibly appear'd,
Love without end, and without measure grace;
Which utt'ring, thus he to his Father spake.

O Father, gracious was that word which clos'd
Thy sovran sentence, that man should find grace;
For which both Heav'n and Earth shall high extol
Thy praises, with th' innumerable sound
Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne
Encompass'd shall resound thee ever blest.
For should man finally be lost? should man,
Thy creature late so lov'd, thy youngest son,
Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd
With his own folly? that be from thee far,
That far be from thee, Father, who art judge
Of all things made, and judgest only right.
Or shall the adversary thus obtain
His end, and frustrate thine? shall he fulfil
His malice, and thy goodness bring to naught?
Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
Yet with revenge accomplish'd, and to Hell
Draw after him the whole race of mankind,
By him corrupted? or wilt thou thyself
Abolish thy creation, and unmake,

For him, what for thy glory thou hast made?
So should thy goodness and thy greatness both
Be question'd, and blasphem'd, without defense.

To whom the great Creator thus reply'd.
O Son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,
Son of my bosom, Son who art alone
My word, my wisdom, and effectual might!
All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are; all
As my eternal purpose hath decreed:
Man shall not quite be lost; but fav'd who will;
Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
Freely vouchsaf'd: once more I will renew
His laps'd pow'rs, though forfeit, and inthrall'd
By sin to foul exorbitant desires:
Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
On even ground against his mortal foe;
By me upheld, that he may know how frail
His fall'n condition is, and to me owe
All his deliverance, and to none but me.
Some I have chosen of peculiar grace,
Elect above the rest; so is my will:
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd
Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
Th' incens'd Deity, while offer'd grace
Invites: for I will clear their senses dark,
What may suffice; and soften stony hearts
To pray, repent, and bring obedience due.
To pray'r, repentance, and obedience due,
Though but endeavor'd with sincere intent,

Mine ear shall not be flow, mine eye not shut.
And I will place within them as a guide
My umpire Conscience, whom if they will hear,
Light after light well us'd they shall attain,
And, to the end persisting, safe arrive.
This my long suff'rance, and my day of grace,
They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste;
But hard be harden'd, blind be blinded more,
That they may stumble on, and deeper fall;
And none but such from mercy I exclude.
But yet all is not done; man, disobeying,
Disloyal breaks his fealty, and sins
Against the high supremacy of Heav'n,
Affecting God-head; and, so losing all,
To expiate his treason hath naught left;
But, to destruction sacred and devote,
He, with his whole posterity, must die;
Die he or justice must; unless for him
Some other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid satisfaction, death for death.
Say, heav'nly Pow'rs, where shall we find such love?
Which of ye will be mortal to redeem
Man's mortal crime, and just th' unjust to save?
Dwells in all Heaven charity so dear?

He ask'd; but all the heav'nly choir stood mute,
And silence was in Heav'n. On man's behalf
Patron or intercessor none appear'd;
Much less that durst upon his own head draw
The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.

And now without redemption all mankind
Must have been lost, adjudg'd to Death and Hell
By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
In whom the fulness dwells of love divine,
His dearest mediation thus renew'd.

Father, thy word is pass'd; man shall find grace:
And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,
The speediest of thy winged messengers,
To visit all thy creatures, and to all
Comes unprevented, unimplor'd, unfought?
Happy for man, so coming: he her aid
Can never seek, once dead in sins, and lost;
Atonement for himself or off'ring meet,
Indebted and undone, hath none to bring.
Behold me then; me for him, life for life,
I offer; on me let thine anger fall;
Account me man: I for his sake will leave
Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
Freely put off, and for him lastly die,
Well pleas'd. On me let death wreak all his rage:
Under his gloomy pow'r I shall not long
Lie vanquish'd: thou hast giv'n me to possess
Life in myself for ev'r; by thee I live,
Though now to Death I yield, and am his due,
All that of me can die; yet, that debt paid,
Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
For ever with corruption there to dwell;
But I shall rise victorious, and subdue

My vanquisher, spoil'd of his vaunted spoil;
Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.
I through the ample air in triumph high
Shall lead Hell captive, maugre Hell, and show
The Pow'rs of darkness bound. Thou, at the sight
Pleas'd, out of Heaven shalt look down and smile;
While, by thee rais'd, I ruin all my foes,
Death last, and with his carcass glut the grave;
Then, with the multitude of my redeem'd,
Shall enter Heav'n long absent, and return,
Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
Of anger shall remain, but peace assur'd
And reconciliation: wrath shall be no more
Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire.

His words here ended; but his meek aspect
Silent yet spake, and breath'd immortal love
To mortal men, above which only shone
Filial obedience: as a sacrifice
Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will
Of his great Father. Admiration seis'd
All Heav'n, what this might mean, and whither tend,
Wond'ring: but soon th' Almighty thus reply'd.

O thou in Heav'n and Earth the only peace
Found out for mankind under wrath! O thou
My sole complacence! well thou know'st how dear
To me are all my works, nor man the least,
Though last created; that for him I spare

Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,
By losing thee a while, the whole race lost.
Thou therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,
Their nature also to thy nature join;
And be thyself man among men on earth,
Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin feed,
By wondrous birth: be thou, in Adam's room,
The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
As in him perish all men, so in thee,
As from a second root, shall be restor'd
As many as are restor'd; without thee none.
His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit,
Imputed, shall absolve them who renounce
Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
Receive new life. So man, as is most just,
Shall satisfy for man, be judg'd, and die;
And dying rise, and rising with him raise
His brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life.
So heav'nly love shall outdo hellish hate,
Giving to death, and dying to redeem,
So dearly to redeem what hellish hate
So easily destroy'd, and still destroys
In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.
Because thou hast (though thron'd in highest bliss
Equal to God, and equally enjoying
God-like fruition) quitted all to save
A world from utter loss, and hast been found

By merit more than birthright Son of God,
Found worthiest to be so by being good,
Far more than great or high; because in thee
Love hath abounded more than glory['] abounds;
Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
With thee thy manhood also to this throne;
Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign
Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,
Anointed universal King: all pow'r
I give thee: reign for ever, and assume
Thy merits: under thee, as Head supreme,
Thrones, Princedoms, Pow'rs, Dominions, I reduce:
All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide
In Heav'n or Earth, or under Earth in Hell.
When thou, attended gloriously from Heav'n,
Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
The summoning Arch-Angels to proclaim
Thy dread tribunal; forthwith from all winds
The living, and forthwith the cited dead
Of all past ages, to the gen'ral doom
Shall hasten; such a peal shall rouse their sleep.
Then, all thy faints assembled, thou shalt judge
Bad men and Angels; they, arraign'd, shall sink
Beneath thy sentence: Hell, her numbers full,
Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Mean-while
The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
New Heav'n and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell,
And, after all their tribulations, long
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth.

Then thou thy regal scepter shalt lay by;
For regal scepter then no more shall need;
God shall be all in all. But, all ye Gods,
Adore him, who, to compass all this, dies;
Adore the Son, and honor him as me.

No sooner had th' Almighty ceas'd, but, all
The multitude of Angels, with a shout
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
As from blest'd voices, utt'ring joy, Heav'n rung
With jubilee, and loud Hosannas fill'd
Th' eternal regions: lowly reverent
Tow'rd either throne they bow, and to the ground
With solemn adoration down they cast
Their crowns, inwove with amarant and gold;
Immortal amarant, a flow'r which once
In Paradise, fast by the tree of life,
Began to bloom; but soon for man's offense
To Heav'n remov'd, where first it grew, there grows,
And flow'rs aloft, shading the fount of life,
And where the riv' of bliss through midst of Heav'n
Rolls o'er Elysian flow'rs her amber stream:
With these, that never fade, the Spirits elect
Bind their resplendent locks, inwreath'd with beams;
Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
Impurpled with celestial roses smil'd.
Then, crown'd again, their golden harps they took;
Harps ever tun'd, that glitt'ring by their side
Like quivers hung; and, with preamble sweet

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Then, crown'd again, their golden harps they took;
Harps ever tun'd, that glitt'ring by their side
Like quivers hung; and, with preamble sweet

Of charming fymphony, they introduce
Their facred fong, and waken raptures high :
No voice exempt, no voice but well could join
Melodious part ; fuch concord is in Heav'n.

Thee, Father, firft they fang, Omnipotent,
Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
Eternal King ; thee, Author of all being,
Fountain of light, thyfelf invifible
Amidft the glorious brightnefs where thou fit'ft
Thron'd inacceffible, but when thou fhad'ft
The full blaze of thy beams, and, through a cloud
Drawn round about thee like a radiant fhine,
Dark with exceffive bright thy fkirts appear ;
Yet dazle Heav'n, that brighteft Seraphim
Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.
Thee next they fang of all creation firft,
Begotten Son, Divine Similitude ;
In whose conspicuous count'nance, without cloud
Made vifible, th' Almighty Father fhines,
Whom elfe no creature can behold : on thee
Imprefs'd th' effulgence of his glory abides ;
Transfus'd on thee his ample Spirit refts.
He Heav'n of Heav'ns, and all the Pow'rs therein,
By thee created ; and by thee threw down
Th' aspiring Dominations : thou that day
Thy Father's dreadful thunder didft not fpare,
Nor ftop thy flaming chariot-wheels, that fhook
Heav'n's everlafting frame, while o'er the necks
Thou drov'ft of warring Angels difarray'd.

Back from pursuit, thy Pow'rs with loud acclaim
Thee only extoll'd, Son of thy Father's might,
To execute fierce vengeance on his foes;
Not so on man: him through their malice fall'n,
Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom
So strictly, but much more to pity incline.
No sooner did thy dear and only Son
Perceive thee purpos'd not to doom frail man
So strictly, but much more to pity inclin'd;
He, to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
Of mercy and justice in thy face discern'd,
Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
Second to thee, offer'd himself to die
For man's offense. O unexampled love!
Love no where to be found less than divine!
Hail, Son of God, Saviour of men! thy name
Shall be the copious matter of my song
Henceforth; and never shall my harp thy praise
Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin.

Thus they in Heav'n, above the starry sphere,
Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.
Mean-while, upon the firm opacous globe
Of this round world, whose first convéx divides
The luminous inferior orbs, enclos'd
From Chaos and th' inróde of Darknes old,
Satan alighted walks. A globe far off
It seem'd; now seems a boundless continent
Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night
Starless expos'd, and ever threat'ning storms

Of Chaos bluft'ring round, inclement ſky ;
Save on that ſide which from the wall of Heav'n,
Though diſtant far, ſome ſmall reflexion gains
Of glimm'ring air, leſs vex'd with tempeſt loud.
Here walk'd the Fiend at large in ſpacious field.
As when a vultur on Imaüs bred,
Whoſe ſnowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Diſlodging from a region ſcarce of prey,
To gorge the fleſh of lambs or yeanling kids
On hills where flocks are fed, flies tow'rd the ſprings
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian ſtreams ;
But, in his way, lights on the barren plains
Of Sericana, where Chineſes drive
With fails and wind their cany waggons light :
So, on this windy ſea of land, the Fiend
Walk'd up and down alone, bent on his prey ;
Alone ; for other creature in this place,
Living or lifeleſs, to be found was none ;
None yet ; but ſtore hereafter from the earth
Up hither, like aëreal vapors, flew,
Of all things tranſitory and vain, when ſin
With vanity had fill'd the works of men ;
Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
Built their fond hopes of glory or laſting fame,
Or happineſs in this or th' other life :
All who have their reward on earth, the fruits
Of painful ſuperſtition and blind zeal,
Naught ſeeking but the praiſe of men, here find
Fit retribution, empty as their deeds ;
All th' unaccompliſh'd works of Nature's hand,

Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd,
Dissolv'd on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
Till final dissolution, wander here,
Not in the neighb'ring moon, as some have dream'd;
Those argent fields, more likely habitants,
Translated Saints, or middle Spirits, hold,
Betwixt th' angelical and human kind.
Hither, of ill-join'd sons and daughters born,
First from the ancient world those giants came,
With many a vain exploit, though then renown'd:
The builders next of Babel on the plain
Of Senaär; and still with vain design
New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build:
Others came fingle; he who, to be deem'd
A God, leap'd fondly into Ætna flames,
Empedocles; and he who, to enjoy
Plato's Elysium, leap'd into the sea,
Cleombrotus; and many more too long,
Embryoes and idiots, eremites and friers
White, black, and gray, with all their trumpery.
Here pilgrims roam, that stray'd so far to seek
In Golgotha him dead, who lives in Heav'n;
And they who, to be sure of Paradise,
Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
Or in Franciscan think to pass disguis'd:
They pass the planets sev'n, and pass the fix'd,
And that crystalline sphere whose balance weighs
The trepidation talk'd, and that first mov'd;
And now Saint Peter at Heav'n's wicket seems
To wait them with his keys; and now, at foot

Of Heav'n's ascent, they lift their feet; when lo
A violent cross wind from either coast
Blows them transverse ten thousand leagues awry
Into the devious air; then might ye see
Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers, toss'd
And flutter'd into rags; then reliques, beads,
Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
The sport of winds: all these, up-whirl'd aloft,
Fly o'er the backside of the world far off
Into a Limbo large and broad, since call'd
The Paradise of Fools; to few unknown
Long after; now unpeopled and untrod.
All this dark globe the Fiend found as he pass'd;
And long he wander'd, till, at last, a gleam
Of dawning light turn'd thither-ward in haste
His travel'd steps: far distant he descries,
Ascending by degrees magnificent
Up to the wall of Heav'n, a structure high;
At top whereof, but far more rich, appear'd
The work as of a kingly palace gate,
With frontispiece of diamond and gold
Embellish'd; thick with sparkling orient gems
The portal shone, inimitable on earth,
By model or by shading pencil drawn.
The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw
Angels ascending and descending, bands
Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz
Dreaming by night under the open sky,
And waking cry'd, This is the gate of Heav'n.

Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
There always, but drawn up to Heav'n sometimes
Viewless; and underneath a bright sea flow'd
Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon
Who after came from earth, failing arriv'd,
Wafted by Angels, or flew o'er the lake,
Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.
The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
The Fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate
His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss:
Direct against which open'd from beneath,
Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
A passage down to th' earth; a passage wide,
Wider by far than that of after-times
Over mount Sion, and, though that were large,
Over the Promis'd Land to God so dear;
By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
On high behests his Angels to and fro
Pass'd frequent, and his eye, with choice regard,
From Paneäs, the fount of Jordan's flood,
To Beërsaba, where the Holy Land
Borders on Ægypt and th' Arabian shore;
So wide the op'ning seem'd, where bounds were set
To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.
Satan from hence, now on the lower stair,
That scal'd by steps of gold to Heaven gate,
Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
Of all this world at once. As when a scout,
Through dark and desert ways with peril gone
All night, at last by break of cheerful dawn

Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,
Which to his eye discovers unaware
The goodly prospect of some foreign land
First seen, or some renown'd metropolis,
With glist'ring spires and pinnacles adorn'd,
Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams:
Such wonder seis'd, though after Heaven seen,
The Spirit malign; but much more envy seis'd,
At sight of all this world beheld so fair.
Round he surveys (and well might, where he stood,
So high above the circling canopy
Of night's extended shade), from eastern point
Of Libra, to the fleecy star that bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
Beyond th' horizon: then from pole to pole
He views in breadth; and, without longer pause,
Down right into the world's first region throws
His flight precipitant, and winds with ease
Through the pure marble air his oblique way,
Amongst innumerable stars, that shone
Stars distant, but nigh hand seem'd other worlds;
Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
Like those Hesperian gardens fam'd of old,
Fortunate fields, and groves, and flow'ry vales;
Thrice happy isles; but who dwelt happy there
He stay'd not to inquire. Above them all,
The golden sun, in splendor likest Heav'n,
Allur'd his eye. Thither his course he bends
Through the calm firmament (but up or down,
By center or eccentric, hard to tell,

Or longitude); where the great luminary,
Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,
That from his lordly eye keep distance due,
Dispenses light from far: they, as they move
Their starry dance in numbers that compute
Days, months, and years, tow'rd his all-cheering lamp
Turn swift their various motions, or are turn'd
By his magnetic beam, that gently warms
The universe, and to each inward part,
With gentle penetration, though unseen,
Shoots invisible virtue ev'n to th' deep:
So wond'rously was set his station bright.
There lands the Fiend; a spot like which, perhaps,
Astronomer, in the sun's lucent orb,
Through his glaz'd optic tube, yet never saw.
The place he found beyond expression bright,
Compar'd with aught on earth, metal or stone;
Not all parts like, but all alike inform'd
With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire:
If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear;
If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone
In Aaron's breast-plate; and a stone besides
Imagin'd rather oft than elsewhere seen;
That stone, or like to that, which here below
Philosophers in vain so long have fought;
In vain, though by their pow'rful art they bind
Volatile Hermes, and call up unbound
In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,
Drain'd through a limbec to his native form.

What wonder, then, if fields and regions here
Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run
Potable gold, when, with one virtuous touch,
Th' arch-chemic sun, so far from us remote,
Produces, with terrestrial humor mix'd,
Here in the dark so many precious things,
Of color glorious, and effect so rare?
Here matter new to gaze the Devil met
Undazled; far and wide his eye commands;
For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,
But all sun-shine, as when his beams at noon
Culminate from th' Æquator; as they now
Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
Shadow from body opaque can fall; and th' air,
No where so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray
To objects distant far; whereby he soon
Saw within ken a glorious Angel stand,
The same whom John saw also in the sun:
His back was turn'd, but not his brightness hid;
Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar
Circled his head; nor less his locks behind
Illustrious, on his shoulders fledge with wings,
Lay waving round: on some great charge employ'd
He seem'd, or fix'd in cogitation deep.
Glad was the Spirit impure, as now in hope
To find who might direct his wand'ring flight
To Paradise, the happy feat of man,
His journey's end, and our beginning woe.
But first he casts to change his proper shape,
Which else might work him danger or delay:

And now a stripling Cherub he appears,
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
Youth smil'd celestial, and to ev'ry limb
Suitable grace diffus'd; so well he feign'd.
Under a coronet his flowing hair
In curls on either cheek play'd; wings he wore
Of many a color'd plume, sprinkled with gold;
His habit fit for speed succinct; and held
Before his decent steps a silver wand.
He drew not nigh unheard: the Angel bright,
Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turn'd,
Admonish'd by his ear; and straight was known
Th' Arch-Angel Uriël, one of the sev'n
Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,
Stand ready at command, and are his eyes
That run through all the Heav'ns, or down to th' Earth
Bear his swift errands, over moist and dry,
O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts.

Uriel! for thou, of those sev'n Spirits that stand
In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright,
The first art wont his great authentic will
Interpreter through highest Heav'n to bring,
Where all his sons thy embassy attend;
And here art likeliest by supreme decree
Like honor to obtain, and, as his eye,
To visit oft this new creation round;
Unspeakable desire to see, and know,
All these his wond'rous works, but chiefly man,
His chief delight and favor, him for whom

All these his works so wond'rous he ordain'd,
Hath brought me from the choirs of Cherubim
Alone thus wand'ring. Brightest Seraph, tell
In which of all these shining orbs hath man
His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,
But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell;
That I may find him, and with secret gaze,
Or open admiration, him behold,
On whom the great Creator hath bestow'd
Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces pour'd;
That both in him and all things, as is meet,
The universal Maker we may praise;
Who justly hath driv'n out his rebel foes
To deepest Hell, and, to repair that loss,
Created this new happy race of men
To serve him better: wise are all his ways.

So spake the false dissembler unperceiv'd;
For neither man nor Angel can discern
Hypocrisy, the only ev'l that walks
Invisible, except to God alone,
By his permissive will, through Heav'n and Earth:
And oft, though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps
At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity
Reigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill
Where no ill seems: which now for once beguil'd
Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held
The sharpest-sighted Spirit of all in Heav'n;
Who, to the fraudulent impostor foul,
In his uprightness answer thus return'd.

Fair Angel, thy desire which tends to know
The works of God, thereby to glorify
The great Work-Master, leads to no excess
That reaches blame, but rather merits praise,
The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,
To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps,
Contented with report, hear only in Heav'n:
For wonderful indeed are all his works,
Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
Had in remembrance always with delight;
But what created mind can comprehend
Their number, or the wisdom infinite
That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?
I saw when, at his word, the formless mass,
This world's material mould, came to a heap:
Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar
Stood rul'd, stood vast infinitude confin'd;
Till, at his second bidding, darkness fled,
Light shone, and order from disorder sprung:
Swift to their sev'ral quarters hasten'd then
The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire;
And this ethereal quintessence of Heav'n
Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
That roll'd orbicular, and turn'd to stars
Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;
Each had his place appointed, each his course;
The rest in circuit wall this universe.
Look downward on that globe, whose hither side
With light from hence, though but reflected, shines:

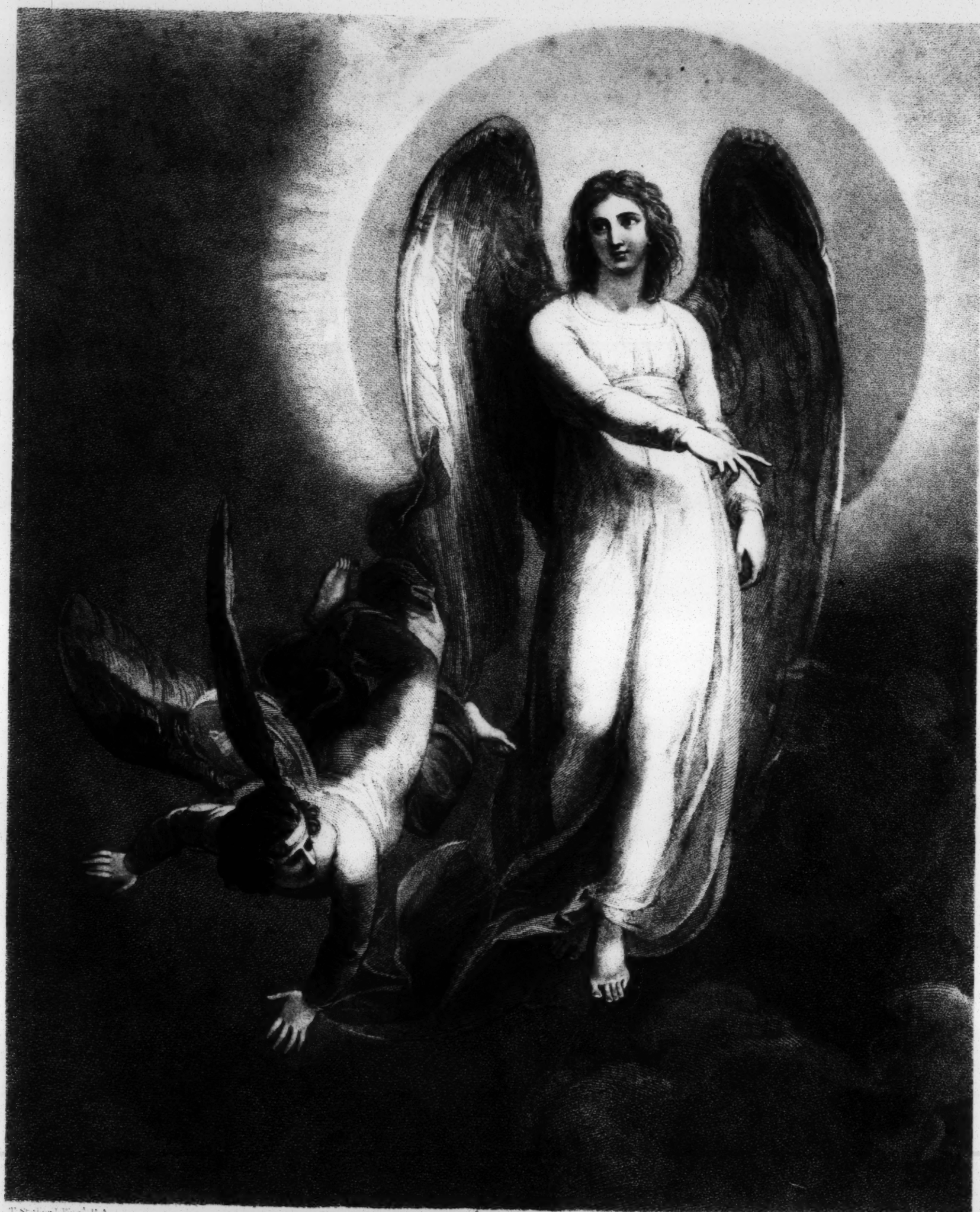
That place is Earth, the seat of man; that light
His day; which else, as th' other hemisphere,
Night would invade; but there the neighb'ring moon
(So call that opposite fair star) her aid
Timely interposes, and, her monthly round
Still ending, still renewing, through mid Heav'n,
With borrow'd light her countenance triform
Hence fills and empties to enlighten th' Earth,
And in her pale dominion checks the night.
That spot to which I point is Paradise,
Adam's abode; those lofty shades his bow'r.
Thy way thou canst not miss; me mine requires.

Thus said, he turn'd; and Satan, bowing low,
(As to superior Spirits is wont in Heav'n,
Where honor due and rev'rence none neglects),
Took leave, and tow'rd the coast of Earth beneath,
Down from th' ecliptic, sped with hop'd success,
Throws his steep flight in many an aery wheel;
Nor stay'd, till on Niphates' top he lights.

THE END OF THE THIRD BOOK.







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THE
FOURTH BOOK
OF
PARADISE LOST.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan, now in prospect of Eden, and nigh the place where he must now attempt the bold enterprize which he undertook alone against God and man, falls into many doubts with himself, and many passions, fear, envy, and despair; but at length confirms himself in evil; journeys on to Paradise, whose outward prospect and situation is described; overleaps the bounds; sits in the shape of a cormorant on the tree of life, as highest in the garden, to look about him. The garden described; Satan's first sight of Adam and Eve; his wonder at their excellent form and happy state, but with resolution to work their fall; overhears their discourse; thence gathers that the tree of knowledge was forbidden them to eat of, under penalty of death; and thereon intends to found his temptation, by seducing them to transgress: then leaves them a while, to know further of their state by some other means. Mean-while Uriel, descending on a sun-beam, warns Gabriel, who had in charge the gate of Paradise, that some evil Spirit had escaped the deep, and passed at noon by his sphere in the shape of a good Angel down to Paradise, discovered after by his furious gestures in the mount. Gabriel promises to find him out ere morning. Night coming on, Adam and Eve discourse of going to their rest: their bower described; their evening worship. Gabriel, drawing forth his bands of night-watch to walk the round of Paradise, appoints two strong Angels to Adam's bower, lest the evil Spirit should be there doing some harm to Adam or Eve sleeping: there they find him at the ear of Eve, tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to Gabriel; by whom questioned, he scornfully answers; prepares resistance; but, hindered by a sign from Heaven, flies out of Paradise.



PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IV.

O For that warning voice, which he, who saw
Th' Apocalyps, heard cry in Heav'n aloud
(Then when the dragon, put to second rout,
Came furious down to be reveng'd on men),
Woe to th' inhabitants on earth! that now,
While time was, our first parents had been warn'd
The coming of their secret foe, and 'scap'd,
Haply so 'scap'd, his mortal snare. For now
Satan, now first inflam'd with rage, came down,
The tempter ere th' accuser of man-kind,
To wreak on innocent frail man his loss
Of that first battel, and his flight to Hell:
Yet not rejoicing in his speed, though bold
Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,

Begins his dire attempt, which, nigh the birth
Now rolling, boils in his tumultuous breast,
And, like a devilish engine, back recoils
Upon himself. Horror and doubt distract
His troubled thoughts; and, from the bottom, stir
The Hell within him; for within him Hell
He brings, and round about him; nor from Hell
One step, no more than from himself, can fly
By change of place. Now conscience wakes despair,
That slumber'd; wakes the bitter memory
Of what he was, what is, and what must be;
Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.
Sometimes tow'rs Eden, which now in his view
Lay pleasant, his griev'd look he fixes sad;
Sometimes tow'rs Heav'n and the full-blazing sun,
Which now sat high in his meridian tow'r:
Then, much revolving, thus in sighs began.

O thou that, with surpassing glory crown'd,
Look'st from thy sole dominion like the God
Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars
Hide their diminish'd heads; to thee I call,
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
That bring to my remembrance from what state
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;
Till pride and worse ambition threw me down,
Warring in Heav'n against Heav'n's matchless King:
Ah wherefore? he deserv'd no such return
From me, whom he created what I was

In that bright eminence, and with his good
Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.
What could be less than to afford him praise,
The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks?
How due! yet all his good prov'd ill in me,
And wrought but malice: lifted up so high,
I disdain'd subjection, and thought one step higher
Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
The debt immense of endless gratitude,
So burthensome, still paying, still to owe;
Forgetful what from him I still receiv'd;
And understood not, that a grateful mind,
By owing, owes not, but still pays, at once
Indebted and discharg'd: what burthen then?
O had his pow'rful destiny ordain'd
Me some inferior Angel; I had stood
Then happy; no unbounded hope had rais'd
Ambition. Yet why not? some other Pow'r
As great might have aspir'd, and me, though mean,
Drawn to his part; but other Pow'rs as great
Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within,
Or from without, to all temptations arm'd.
Hadst thou the same free will and pow'r to stand?
Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what to accuse,
But Heav'n's free love dealt equally to all?
Be then his love accurs'd; since, love or hate,
To me alike, it deals eternal woe.
Nay, curs'd be thou; since, against his, thy will
Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
Me miserable! which way shall I fly

Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell;
And in the lowest deep a lower deep,
Still threat'ning to devour me, opens wide;
To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heav'n.
O then at last relent! Is there no place
Left for repentance, none for pardon left?
None left but by submission; and that word
Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
Among the Spirits beneath, whom I seduc'd
With other promises and other vaunts
Than to submit, boasting I could subdue
Th' Omnipotent. Ay me! they little know
How dearly I abide that boast so vain;
Under what torments inwardly I groan;
While they adore me on the throne of Hell.
With diadem and scepter high advanc'd,
The lower still I fall, only supreme
In misery; such joy ambition finds.
But say, I could repent, and could obtain,
By act of grace, my former state; how soon
Would highth recall high thoughts, how soon unsay
What feign'd submission swore! ease would recant
Vows made in pain, as violent and void:
(For never can true reconciliation grow
Where wounds of deadly hate have pierc'd so deep:)
Which would but lead me to a worse relapse,
And heavier fall: so should I purchase dear
Short intermission, bought with double smart.
This knows my punisher; therefore as far

From granting he, as I from begging, peace.
All hope excluded thus, behold, in stead
Of us out-cast, exil'd, his new delight
Mankind created, and for him this world.
So farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear;
Farewell remorse! all good to me is lost:
Evil, be thou my good; by thee, at least,
Divided empire with Heav'n's King I hold;
By thee, and more than half, perhaps, will reign;
As man ere long, and this new world, shall know.

Thus while he spake, each passion dimm'd his face,
Thrice chang'd with pale, ire, envy, and despair;
Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betray'd
Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld;
For heav'nly minds from such distempers foul
Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,
Each perturbation smooth'd with outward calm,
Artificer of fraud; and was the first
That practis'd falsehood under faintly show,
Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge;
Yet not enough had practis'd to deceive
Uriel once warn'd; whose eye pursu'd him down
The way he went, and on th' Assyrian mount
Saw him disfigur'd, more than could befall
Spirit of happy sort: his gestures fierce
He mark'd, and mad demeanor, then alone,
As he suppos'd, all unobserv'd, unseen.
So on he fares, and to the border comes
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,

Now nearer, crowns with her enclofure green,
As with a rural mound, the champaign head
Of a fteep wildernefs, whose hairy fides,
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
Access deny'd; and over head up-grew
Infuperable highth of loftieft fhade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm;
A fylvan fcene; and, as the ranks afcend
Shade above fhade, a woody theatre
Of ftatelieft view. Yet higher than their tops
The verd'rous wall of Paradife up-fprung;
Which to our gen'ral fire gave profpect large
Into his nether empire, neighb'ring round.
And, higher than that wall, a circling row
Of goodlieft trees, loaden with faireft fruit,
Bloffoms and fruits at once of golden hue,
Appear'd, with gay enamel'd colors mix'd;
On which the fun more glad imprefs'd his beams,
Than on fair ev'ning cloud, or humid bow,
When God hath fhow'r'd the earth; fo lovely feem'd
That landscape. And, of pure, now purer air
Meets his approach, and to the heart infpires
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
All fadnefs but defpair. Now gentle gales,
Fanning their odorif'rous wings, difpenfe
Native perfumes, and whifper whence they ftole
Thofe balmy fpoils. As, when, to them who fail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are paft
Mozambic, off at fea north-eaft winds blow
Sabæan odors from the fpicy fhore

Of Araby the blest; with such delay
Well pleas'd, they slack their course, and many a league,
Cheer'd with the grateful smell, old Ocean smiles:
So entertain'd those odorous sweets the Fiend,
Who came their bane, though with them better pleas'd
Than Asmodeüs with the fishy fume,
That drove him, though enamor'd, from the spouse
Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent
From Media post to Ægypt, there fast bound.

Now to th' ascent of that steep savage hill
Satan had journey'd on, penfive and slow;
But further way found none; so thick intwin'd,
As one continu'd brake, the under-growth
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplex'd
All path of man or beast that pass'd that way:
One gate there only was, and that look'd east
On th' other side; which when th' arch-felon saw,
Due entrance he disdain'd, and, in contempt,
At one flight bound high over-leap'd all bound
Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within
Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve
In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,
Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold:
Or as a thief, bent to unhoard the cash
Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
Cross-barr'd and bolted fast, fear no assault,
In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles:

So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold;
So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.
Thence up he flew; and, on the tree of life,
The middle tree, and highest there that grew,
Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life
Thereby regain'd; but sat devising death
To them who liv'd: nor on the virtue thought
Of that life-giving plant; but only us'd,
For prospect, what well us'd had been the pledge
Of immortality. So little knows
Any, but God alone, to value right
The good before him; but perverts best things
To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.
Beneath him, with new wonder, now he views,
To all delight of human sense expos'd
In narrow room, Nature's whole wealth; yea more,
A Heav'n on Earth: for blissful Paradise
Of God the garden was, by him in th' east
Of Eden planted: Eden stretch'd her line
From Auran eastward to the royal tow'rs
Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings;
Or where the sons of Eden long before
Dwelt in Telassar. In this pleasant soil
His far more pleasant garden God ordain'd:
Out of the fertile ground he caus'd to grow
All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;
And all amid them stood the tree of life,
High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
Of vegetable gold; and, next to life,
Our death, the tree of knowledge, grew fast by;

Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill.
Southward through Eden went a river large,
Nor chang'd his course, but through the shaggy hill
Pass'd underneath ingulf'd; for God had thrown
That mountain as his garden mould, high rais'd
Upon the rapid current, which, through veins
Of porous earth with kindly thirst up-drawn,
Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
Water'd the garden; thence united fell
Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood;
Which from his darksome passage now appears;
And now, divided into four main streams,
Runs diverse, wand'ring many a famous realm
And country, whereof here needs no account;
But rather to tell how, if art could tell,
How from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
With mazy error under pendent shades
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
Flow'rs, worthy of Paradise, which not nice art
In beds and curious knots, but nature boon
Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpierc'd shade
Imbrown'd the noon-tide bow'rs. Thus was this place
A happy rural seat of various view;
Groves, whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm;
Others, whose fruit, burnish'd with golden rind,
Hung amiable (Hesperian fables true,
If true, here only), and of delicious taste:

Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
Graſing the tender herb, were interpos'd,
Or palmy hilloc; or the flow'ry lap
Of ſome irriguous valley ſpread her ſtore;
Flow'rs of all hue, and without thorn the roſe:
Another ſide, umbrageous grotts and caves
Of cool receſs, o'er which the mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant: mean-while murm'ring waters fall
Down the ſlope hills, diſpers'd; or in a lake,
That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd
Her cryſtal mirror holds, unite their ſtreams.
The birds their choir apply; airs, vernal airs,
Breathing the ſmell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves, while univerſal Pan,
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
Led on th' eternal ſpring. Not that fair field
Of Enna, where Proſerpine, gath'ring flow'rs,
Herſelf a fairer flow'r, by gloomy Dis
Was gather'd (which coſt Ceres all that pain
To ſeek her through the world); nor that ſweet grove
Of Daphne by Orontes, and th' inſpir'd
Caſtalian ſpring, might with this Paradife
Of Eden ſtrive; nor that Nyſeian iſle,
Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Libyan Jove,
Hid Amalthea, and her florid ſon,
Young Bacchus, from his ſtepdame Rhea's eye;
Nor where Abaſſin kings their iſſue guard,
Mount Amara; though this by ſome ſuppos'd

True Paradise, under the Æthiop line,
By Nilus' head, enclos'd with shining rock,
A whole day's journey high, but wide remote
From this Assyrian garden; where the Fiend
Saw, undelighted, all delight, all kind
Of living creatures new to fight and strange.
Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
God-like erect, with native honor clad,
In naked majesty, seem'd lords of all;
And worthy seem'd: for, in their looks divine,
The image of their glorious Maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure;
Severe, but in true filial freedom plac'd;
Whence true authority in men; though both
Not equal, as their sex not equal seem'd;
For contemplation he, and valor, form'd;
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace;
He, for God only; she, for God in him.
His fair large front, and eye sublime, declar'd
Absolute rule; and hyacinthine locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clust'ring, but not beneath his shoulders broad.
She, as a veil, down to the slender waist,
Her unadorned golden tresses wore
Dishevel'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd,
As the vine curls her tendrils; which imply'd
Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway,
And by her yielded, by him best receiv'd,
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,
And sweet, reluctant, amorous delay.

Nor those mysterious parts were then conceal'd;
Then was not guilty shame, dishonest shame
Of nature's works, honor dishonorable;
Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind
With shows in-steed, mere shows of seeming pure;
And banish'd from man's life his happiest life,
Simplicity and spotless innocence!
So pass'd they naked on, nor shunn'd the sight
Of God or Angel; for they thought no ill:
So, hand in hand, they pass'd; the loveliest pair
That ever since in love's embraces met;
Adam, the goodliest man of men since born
His sons; the fairest of her daughters, Eve.
Under a tuft of shade, that on a green
Stood whisp'ring soft, by a fresh fountain side,
They sat them down; and, after no more toil
Of their sweet gard'ning labor than suffic'd
To recommend cool Zephyr, and made ease
More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite
More grateful, to their supper fruits they fell;
Nectarine fruits, which the compliant boughs
Yielded them, side-long as they sat recline
On the soft downy bank damask'd with flow'rs:
The sav'ry pulp they chew, and in the rind
Still, as they thirsted, scoop the brimming stream;
Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles,
Wanted, nor youthful dalliance, as befits
Fair couple, link'd in happy nuptial league,
Alone as they. About them frisking play'd
All beasts of th' earth, since wild, and of all chase

In wood or wilderness, forest or den :
Sporting the lion ramp'd, and in his paw
Dandled the kid : bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
Gambol'd before them : th' unwieldy elephant,
To make them mirth, us'd all his might, and wreath'd
His lithe proboscis : close the serpent fly
Infinuating, wove with Gordian twine
His braided train, and of his fatal guile
Gave proof unheeded : others on the grafs
Couch'd, and now fill'd with pasture gazing fat,
Or bed-ward ruminating ; for the sun,
Declin'd, was hasting now with prone career
To th' ocean isles, and, in th' ascending scale
Of Heav'n, the stars that usher ev'ning rose :
When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,
Scarce thus at length fail'd speech recover'd sad.

O Hell ! what do mine eyes with grief behold ?
Into our room of bliss thus high advanc'd
Creatures of other mould ; earth-born perhaps,
Not Spirits ; yet to heav'nly Spirits bright
Little inferior ; whom my thoughts pursue
With wonder, and could love ; so lively shines
In them divine resemblance, and such grace
The hand that form'd them on their shape hath pour'd.
Ah, gentle pair ! ye little think how nigh
Your change approaches, when all these delights
Will vanish, and deliver ye to woe ;
More woe, the more your taste is now of joy :
Happy ! but, for so happy, ill secur'd

Long to continue; and this high feat, 'your Heav'n,
Ill fens'd for Heav'n to keep out such a foe
As now is enter'd; yet no purpos'd foe
To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
Though I unpity'd. League with you I seek,
And mutual amity, so strait, so close,
That I with you must dwell, or you with me,
Henceforth. My dwelling haply may not please,
Like this fair Paradise, your sense; yet such
Accept your Maker's work: he gave it me,
Which I as freely give. Hell shall unfold,
To entertain you two, her widest gates,
And send forth all her kings: there will be room,
Not like these narrow limits, to receive
Your num'rous offspring: if no better place,
Thank him who puts me loth to this revenge
On you, who wrong me not, for him who wrong'd.
And, should I at your harmless innocence
Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,
Honor and empire with revenge enlarg'd,
By conqu'ring this new world, compels me now
To do what else, though damn'd, I should abhor.

So spake the Fiend; and with necessity,
The tyrant's plea, excus'd his devilish deeds.
Then, from his lofty stand on that high tree,
Down he alights among the sportful herd
Of those four-footed kinds; himself now one,
Now other, as their shape serv'd best his end,
Nearer to view his prey, and, unespied,

To mark what of their state he more might learn
By word or action mark'd: about them round
A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;
Then, as a tiger, who by chance hath spy'd
In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,
Straight couches close; then rising changes oft
His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,
Whence rushing he might surest seize them both,
Grip'd in each paw: when Adam, first of men,
To first of women, Eve, thus moving speech,
Turn'd him all ear to hear new utterance flow.

Sole partner, and sole part, of all these joys,
Dearer thyself than all! needs must the Pow'r
That made us, and for us this ample world,
Be infinitely good, and of his good
As liberal and free as infinite;
That rais'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here
In all this happiness, who at his hand
Have nothing merited, nor can perform
Aught whereof he hath need; he who requires
From us no other service than to keep
This one, this easy charge; of all the trees
In Paradise, that bear delicious fruit
So various, not to taste that only tree
Of knowledge, planted by the tree of life;
So near grows death to life, whate'er death is;
Some dreadful thing, no doubt; for, well thou know'st,
God hath pronounc'd it death to taste that tree;
The only sign of our obedience left,

Among so many signs of pow'r and rule
Conferr'd upon us, and dominion giv'n
Over all other creatures that possess
Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard
One easy prohibition, who enjoy
Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
Unlimited of manifold delights:
But let us ever praise him, and extol
His bounty, following our delightful task,
To prune these growing plants, and tend these flow'rs;
Which, were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet.

To whom thus Eve reply'd. O thou for whom,
And from whom, I was form'd, flesh of thy flesh,
And without whom am to no end! my guide
And head! what thou hast said is just and right.
For we to him, indeed, all praises owe,
And daily thanks; I chiefly, who enjoy
So far the happier lot, enjoying thee
Pre-eminent by so much odds, while thou
Like comfort to thyself canst no where find.
That day I oft remember, when from sleep
I first awak'd, and found myself repos'd
Under a shade, on flow'rs; much wond'ring where
And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
Not distant far from thence, a murm'ring sound
Of waters issu'd from a cave, and spread
Into a liquid plain; then stood unmov'd,
Pure as th' expanse of Heav'n. I thither went
With unexperienc'd thought, and laid me down

On the green bank, to look into the clear
Smooth lake, that to me seem'd another sky.
As I bent down to look, just opposite
A shape within the wat'ry gleam appear'd,
Bending to look on me: I started back;
It started back: but, pleas'd, I soon return'd;
Pleas'd, it return'd as soon, with answ'ring looks
Of sympathy and love: there I had fix'd
Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,
Had not a voice thus warn'd me: What thou seest,
What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself;
With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
And I will bring thee where no shadow stays
Thy coming, and thy soft embraces; he
Whose image thou art: him thou shalt enjoy
Inseparably thine; to him shalt bear
Multitudes like thyself, and thence be call'd
Mother of human race. What could I do,
But follow straight, invisibly thus led,
Till I espy'd thee, fair indeed and tall,
Under a platan; yet, methought, less fair,
Less winning soft, less amiably mild,
Than that smooth wat'ry image? back I turn'd;
Thou following cry'dst aloud, Return, fair Eve!
Whom fly'st thou? whom thou fly'st, of him thou art,
His flesh, his bone: to give thee being, I lent
Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,
Substantial life; to have thee by my side,
Henceforth, an individual solace dear:
Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee claim

My other half. With that thy gentle hand
Seis'd mine: I yielded; and, from that time, see
How beauty is excell'd by manly grace,
And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.

So spake our gen'ral mother; and, with eyes
Of conjugal attraction unprov'd,
And meek surrender, half embracing lean'd
On our first father; half her swelling breast
Naked met his, under the flowing gold
Of her loose tresses hid: he, in delight
Both of her beauty and submissive charms,
Smil'd with superior love; as Jupiter
On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds
That shed May flow'rs; and press'd her matron lip
With kisses pure. Aside the Devil turn'd
For envy; yet, with jealous leer malign,
Ey'd them askance; and to himself thus plain'd.

Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two,
Imparadis'd in one another's arms,
The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
Of bliss on bliss; while I to Hell am thrust,
Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
Among our other torments not the least,
Still unfill'd, with pain of longing pines.
Yet let me not forget what I have gain'd
From their own mouths: all is not their's, it seems:
One fatal tree there stands, of knowledge call'd,
Forbidden them to taste: knowledge forbidden?

Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord
Envy them that? can it be sin to know?
Can it be death? and do they only stand
By ignorance? is that their happy state,
The proof of their obedience and their faith?
O fair foundation laid whereon to build
Their ruin! Hence I will excite their minds
With more desire to know, and to reject
Envious commands, invented with design
To keep them low whom knowledge might exalt
Equal with Gods: aspiring to be such,
They taste, and die: what likelier can ensue?
But first, with narrow search, I must walk round
This garden, and no corner leave unspy'd;
A chance but chance may lead where I may meet
Some wand'ring Spirit of Heav'n, by fountain side,
Or in thick shade retir'd, from him to draw
What further would be learn'd. Live while ye may,
Yet happy pair! enjoy, till I return,
Short pleasures; for long woes are to succeed.

So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,
But with sly circumspection; and began,
Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale, his roam.
Mean-while, in utmost longitude, where Heav'n
With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun
Slowly descended; and with right aspect,
Against the eastern gate of Paradise,
Level'd his ev'ning rays. It was a rock
Of alabaster, pil'd up to the clouds,

Conspicuous far; winding with one ascent
Accessible from earth, one entrance high:
The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
Still as it rose, impossible to climb.
Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel sat,
Chief of th' angelic guards, awaiting night:
About him exercis'd heroic games
Th' unarmed youth of Heav'n; but, nigh at hand,
Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,
Hung high, with diamond flaming, and with gold.
Thither came Uriel, gliding through the ev'n
On a sun-beam, swift as a shooting star
In autumn thwarts the night, when vapors fir'd
Impress the air, and shows the mariner
From what point of his compass to beware
Impetuous winds: he thus began in haste.

Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath giv'n
Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place
No evil thing approach or enter in.
This day, at highth of noon, came to my sphere
A Spirit, zealous, as he seem'd, to know
More of th' Almighty's works, and chiefly man,
God's latest image: I describ'd his way,
Bent all on speed, and mark'd his aery gait;
But, in the mount that lies from Eden north,
Where he first lighted, soon discern'd his looks
Alien from Heav'n, with passions foul obscur'd:
Mine eye pursu'd him still, but under shade
Lost sight of him: one of the banish'd crew,

I fear, hath ventur'd from the deep, to raise
New troubles: him thy care must be to find.

To whom the winged warrior thus return'd.
Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect fight,
Amid the sun's bright circle where thou sitt'st,
See far and wide. In at this gate none pass
The vigilance here plac'd, but such as come
Well known from Heav'n; and, since meridian hour,
No creature thence. If Spirit of other sort,
So minded, have o'er-leap'd these earthy bounds
On purpose, hard thou know'st it to exclude
Spiritual substance with corporeal bar.
But if, within the circuit of these walks,
In whatsoever shape, he lurk, of whom
Thou tell'st, by morrow dawning I shall know.

So promis'd he; and Uriel to his charge
Return'd on that bright beam, whose point now rais'd
Bore him slope downward to the sun, now fall'n
Beneath th' Azorès; whether the prime orb,
Incredible how swift, had thither roll'd
Diurnal; or this less volúbile earth,
By shorter flight to th' east, had left him there,
Arraying, with reflected purple and gold,
The clouds that on his western throne attend.
Now came still ev'ning on; and twilight gray
Had in her sober liv'ry all things clad:
Silence accompany'd; for beast and bird,
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests,

Were flunk; all but the wakeful nightingale;
She, all night long, her am'rous descant sung;
Silence was pleas'd. Now glow'd the firmament
With living sapphires: Hesperus, that led
The starry host, rode brightest; till the moon,
Rising in clouded majesty, at length,
Apparent queen, unveil'd her peerless light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.

When Adam thus to Eve. Fair consort, th' hour
Of night, and all things now retir'd to rest,
Mind us of like repose; since God hath set
Labor and rest, as day and night, to men
Successive; and the timely dew of sleep,
Now falling with soft slumb'rous weight, inclines
Our eye-lids. Other creatures, all day long,
Rove idle, unemploy'd, and less need rest;
Man hath his daily work of body or mind
Appointed; which declares his dignity,
And the regard of Heav'n on all his ways;
While other animals unactive range,
And of their doings God takes no account.
To-morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east
With first approach of light, we must be ris'n,
And at our pleasant labor, to reform
Yon flow'ry arbors, yonder alleys green,
Our walk at noon, with branches over-grown,
That mock our scant manuring, and require
More hands than our's to lop their wanton growth:
Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums,

That lie bestrown, unfightly and unsmooth,
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease:
Mean-while, as nature wills, night bids us rest.

To whom thus Eve, with perfect beauty adorn'd.
My author and disposer, what thou bidd'st,
Unargu'd, I obey: so God ordains:
God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more,
Is woman's happiest knowledge, and her praise.
With thee conversing, I forget all time;
All seasons, and their change; all please alike.
Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flow'r,
Glitt'ring with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
After soft show'rs; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful ev'ning mild; then silent night,
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these the gems of Heav'n, her starry train:
But neither breath of morn, when she ascends
With charm of earliest birds; nor rising sun
On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flow'r,
Glitt'ring with dew; nor fragrance after show'rs;
Nor grateful ev'ning mild; nor silent night,
With this her solemn bird; nor walk by moon,
Or glitt'ring star-light, without thee is sweet.
But wherefore all night long shine these? for whom
This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?

To whom our gen'ral ancestor reply'd.
Daughter of God and man, accomplish'd Eve,
Those have their course to finish, round the earth,
By morrow ev'ning; and from land to land
In order, though to nations yet unborn,
Minist'ring light prepar'd, they set and rise;
Left total darkness should by night regain
Her old possession, and extinguish life
In nature and all things; which these soft fires
Not only inlighten, but, with kindly heat
Of various influence, foment and warm,
Temper or nourish; or in part shed down
Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow
On earth, made hereby apter to receive
Perfection from the sun's more potent ray.
These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,
Shine not in vain: nor think, though men were none,
That Heav'n would want spectators, God want praise:
Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep:
All these, with ceaseless praise, his works behold,
Both day and night. How often, from the steep
Of echoing hill or thicket, have we heard
Celestial voices, to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to other's note,
Singing their great Creator! oft, in bands
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,
With heav'nly touch of instrumental sounds,
In full harmonic number join'd, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heav'n.

Thus talking, hand in hand, alone they pass'd
On to their blissful bow'r. It was a place
Chos'n by the sovran Planter, when he fram'd
All things to man's delightful use: the roof,
Of thickest covert, was inwoven shade,
Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf: on either side,
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,
Fens'd up the verdant wall: each beauteous flow'r,
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamin,
Rear'd high their flourish'd heads between, and wrought
Mosaic; under-foot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broider'd the ground, more color'd than with stone
Of costliest emblem. Other creature here,
Beast, bird, insect, or worm, durst enter none;
Such was their awe of man. In shadier bow'r,
More sacred and sequester'd, though but feign'd,
Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor Nymph
Nor Faunus haunted. Here, in close recess,
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed;
And heav'nly choirs the Hymenæan sung;
What day the genial Angel to our fire
Brought her, in naked beauty more adorn'd,
More lovely than Pandora, whom the Gods
Endow'd with all their gifts; and Oh too like
In sad event, when, to th' unwiser son
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she insnar'd
Mankind with her fair looks, to be aveng'd
On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.

Thus at their shady lodge arriv'd, both stood;
Both turn'd; and under open sky ador'd
The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heav'n
(Which they beheld), the moon's resplendent globe,
And starry pole: Thou also mad'st the night,
Maker Omnipotent, and thou the day;
Which we, in our appointed work employ'd,
Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help
And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss
Ordain'd by thee; and this delicious place,
For us too large, where thy abundance wants
Partakers, and uncropp'd falls to the ground.
But thou hast promis'd, from us two, a race
To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.

This said unanimous; and, other rites
Observing none, but adoration pure,
Which God likes best, into their inmost bow'r
Handed they went; and, eas'd the putting off
These troublesome disguises which we wear,
Straight side by side were laid; nor turn'd, I ween,
Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
Mysterious of connubial love refus'd;
Whatever hypocrites austere talk
Of purity, and place, and innocence,
Defaming as impure what God declares
Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.
Our Maker bids increase: who bids abstain
But our Destroyer, foe to God and man?

Hail, wedded Love, mysterious law, true source
Of human offspring, sole propriety,
In Paradise, of all things common else!
By thee adult'rous lust was driv'n from men,
Among the bestial herds to range: by thee,
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, son, and brother, first were known.
Far be it, that I should write thee sin or blame,
Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,
Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets,
Whose bed is undefil'd and chaste pronounc'd,
Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs us'd.
Here Love his golden shafts employs; here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings;
Reigns here, and revels; not in the bought smile
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unindear'd,
Casual fruition; nor in court amours,
Mix'd dance, or wanton masque, or midnight ball,
Or serenate, which the starv'd lover sings
To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.
These, lull'd by nightingales, embracing slept;
And on their naked limbs the flow'ry roof
Show'r'd roses, which the morn repair'd. Sleep on,
Blest pair! and O yet happiest, if ye seek
No happier state, and know to know no more.

Now had night measur'd, with her shadowy cone,
Half way up hill, this vast sublunar vault;
And, from their ivory port, the Cherubim,

Forth iffuing at th' accustom'd hour, flood arm'd
To their night-watches in warlike parade;
When Gabriël to his next in pow'r thus fpake.

Uzziël, half thefe draw off, and coaft the fouth
With ftrictest watch; thefe other wheel the north;
Our circuit meets full weft. As flame they part,
Half wheeling to the fhield, half to the fpear.
From thefe, two ftrong and fubtle Spirits he call'd,
That near him flood; and gave them thus in charge.

Ithuriël and Zephon, with wing'd fpeed
Search through this garden; leave unfearch'd no nook;
But chiefly where thofe two fair creatures lodge,
Now laid perhaps afleep, fecure of harm.
This ev'ning, from the fun's decline, arriv'd
Who tells of fome infernal Spirit feen
Hitherward bent, (who could have thought?) escap'd
The bars of Hell; on errand bad, no doubt:
Such where ye find, feife faft, and hither bring.

So faying, on he led his radiant files,
Dazling the moon: thefe to the bow'r direct,
In fearch of whom they fought. Him there they found
Squat like a toad, clofe at the ear of Eve;
Affaying by his devilifh art to reach
The organs of her fanfy, and with them forge
Illufions as he lift, phantafms and dreams;
Or if, infpiring venom, he might taint
Th' animal fpirits, that from pure blood arife,

Like gentle breaths from rivers pure; thence raise,
At least, distemper'd, discontented thoughts,
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
Blown up with high conceits engend'ring pride.
Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear
Touch'd lightly; for no falsehood can endure
Touch of celestial temper, but returns
Of force to it's own likeness: up he starts
Discover'd and surpris'd. As, when a spark
Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid
Fit for the ton, some magazine to store
Against a rumor'd war, the smutty grain,
With sudden blaze diffus'd, inflames the air;
So started up, in his own shape, the Fiend.
Back stepp'd those two fair Angels, half amaz'd,
So sudden to behold the grisly king;
Yet thus, unmov'd with fear, accost him soon.

Which, of those rebel Spirits adjudg'd to Hell,
Com'st thou, escap'd thy prison? and, transform'd,
Why sat'st thou like an enemy in wait,
Here watching at the head of these that sleep?

Know ye not then, said Satan, fill'd with scorn,
Know ye not me? ye knew me once no mate
For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar:
Not to know me, argues yourselves unknown,
The lowest of your throng; or, if ye know,
Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
Your message, like to end as much in vain?

To whom thus Zephon, answ'ring scorn with scorn.
Think not, revolted Spirit, thy shape the same,
Or undiminish'd brightness, to be known,
As when thou stood'st in Heav'n upright and pure:
That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
Departed from thee; and thou resemblest now
Thy sin, and place of doom, obscure and foul.
But come; for thou, be sure, shalt give account
To him who sent us; whose charge is to keep
This place inviolablè, and these from harm.

So spake the Cherub; and his grave rebuke,
Severe in youthful beauty, added grace
Invincible: abash'd the Devil stood,
And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw, and pin'd
His loss; but chiefly to find here observ'd
His lustre visibly impair'd; yet seem'd
Undaunted. If I must contend, said he,
Best with the best; the sender, not the sent;
Or all at once: more glory will be won,
Or less be lost. Thy fear, said Zephon bold,
Will save us trial, what the least can do
Single against thee, wicked, and thence weak.

The Fiend reply'd not, overcome with rage;
But, like a proud steed rein'd, went haughty on,
Champing his iron curb: to strive, or fly,
He held it vain: awe from above had quell'd
His heart, not else dismay'd. Now drew they nigh

The western point, where those half-rounding guards
Just met, and closing stood in squadron join'd,
Awaiting next command. To whom their chief,
Gabriël, from the front thus call'd aloud.

O friends, I hear the tread of nimble feet,
Hasting this way; and now by glimpse discern
Ithuriël and Zephon through the shade;
And with them comes a third of regal port,
But faded splendor wan; who, by his gait
And fierce demeanor, seems the prince of Hell,
Not likely to part hence without contest.
Stand firm; for in his look defiance lours.

He scarce had ended, when those two approach'd,
And brief related whom they brought, where found,
How busy'd, in what form and posture couch'd.

To whom, with stern regard, thus Gabriël spake.
Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescrib'd
To thy transgressions, and disturb'd the charge
Of others, who approve not to transgress
By thy example, but have pow'r and right
To question thy bold entrance on this place;
Employ'd, it seems, to violate sleep, and those
Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss?

To whom thus Satan, with contemptuous brow.
Gabriël, thou hadst in Heav'n th' esteem of wise,
And such I held thee; but this question ask'd

Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain?
Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,
Though thither doom'd? Thou would'st thyself, no doubt;
And boldly venture to whatever place,
Farthest from pain, where thou might'st hope to change
Torment with ease, and soonest recompense
Dole with delight; which in this place I fought:
To thee no reason, who know'st only good,
But evil hast not try'd: and wilt object
His will who bound us? let him surer bar
His iron gates, if he intends our stay
In that dark durance. Thus much what was ask'd.
The rest is true; they found me where they say;
But that implies not violence or harm.

Thus he in scorn. The warlike Angel mov'd,
Disdainfully half smiling, thus reply'd.
O loss of one in Heav'n to judge of wise,
Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew,
And now returns him, from his prison 'scap'd,
Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise,
Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither,
Unlicens'd, from his bounds in Hell prescrib'd:
So wise he judges it to fly from pain,
However, and to 'scape his punishment!
So judge thou still, presumptuous, till the wrath,
Which thou incurr'st by flying, meet thy flight
Sev'nfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,
Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain
Can equal anger infinite provok'd.

But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee
Came not all Hell broke loose? is pain to them
Less pain, less to be fled? or thou than they
Less hardy to endure? courageous chief,
The first in flight from pain! hadst thou alleg'd
To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.

To which the Fiend thus answer'd, frowning stern.
Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain,
Insulting Angel; well thou know'st I stood
Thy fiercest, when in battel to thy aid
The blasting volley'd thunder made all speed,
And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.
But still thy words at random, as before,
Argue thy inexperience, what behoves,
From hard assays and ill successes past,
A faithful leader; not to hazard all
Through ways of danger by himself untry'd.
I therefore, I alone, first undertook
To wing the desolate abyss, and spy
This new created world, whereof in Hell
Fame is not silent; here in hope to find
Better abode, and my afflicted Pow'rs
To settle here on earth, or in mid air;
Though, for possession, put to try once more
What thou and thy gay legions dare against;
Whose easier business were to serve their Lord
High up in Heav'n, with songs to hymn his throne,
And practis'd distances to cringe, not fight.

To whom the warrior Angel soon reply'd.
To say, and straight unsay, pretending first
Wife to fly pain, professing next the spy,
Argues no leader, but a lyar trac'd,
Satan! and could'st thou faithful add? O name,
O sacred name of faithfulness profan'd!
Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?
Army of Fiends, fit body to fit head!
Was this your discipline, and faith engag'd,
Your military obedience, to dissolve
Allegiance to th' acknowledg'd Pow'r supreme?
And thou, fly hypocrite, who now would'st seem
Patron of liberty, who more than thou
Once fawn'd, and cring'd, and servilely ador'd
Heav'n's awful Monarch? wherefore, but in hope
To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?
But mark what I arrede thee now: Avant!
Fly thither whence thou fledd'st: if from this hour
Within these hallow'd limits thou appear,
Back to th' infernal pit I drag thee chain'd,
And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn
The facile gates of Hell too slightly barr'd.

So threaten'd he; but Satan to no threats
Gave heed, but, waxing more in rage, reply'd.

Then, when I am thy captive, talk of chains,
Proud liminary Cherub; but, ere then,
Far heavier load thyself expect to feel
From my prevailing arm; though Heaven's King

Ride on thy wings, and thou, with thy compeers,
Us'd to the yoke, draw'ft his triumphant wheels
In progress through the road of Heav'n star-pav'd.

While thus he spake, th' angelic squadron bright
Turn'd fiery red, sharp'ning in mooned horns
Their phalanx; and began to hem him round
With ported spears; as thick as when a field
Of Ceres, ripe for harvest, waving bends
Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind
Sways them; the careful ploughman doubting stands,
Left on the threshing-floor his hopeful sheaves
Prove chaff. On th' other side, Satan alarm'd,
Collecting all his might, dilated stood,
Like Teneriff or Atlas unremov'd:
His stature reach'd the sky; and on his crest
Sat horror plum'd; nor wanted in his grasp
What seem'd both spear and shield. Now dreadful deeds
Might have ensu'd; nor only Paradise
In this commotion, but the starry cope
Of Heav'n perhaps, or all the elements
At least, had gone to wreck, disturb'd and torn
With violence of this conflict; had not soon
Th' Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
Hung forth in Heav'n his golden scales, yet seen
Betwixt Atræa and the Scorpion sign;
Wherein all things created first he weigh'd;
The pendulous round earth, with balanc'd air
In counterpoise; now ponders all events,
Battels and realms: in these he put two weights,

The sequel each of parting and of fight :
The latter quick up-flew, and kick'd the beam ;
Which Gabriël spying, thus bespake the Fiend.

Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st mine ;
Neither our own, but giv'n : what folly then
To boast what arms can do ! since thine no more
Than Heav'n permits ; nor mine, though doubled now
To trample thee as mire. For proof look up,
And read thy lot in yon celestial sign ;
Where thou art weigh'd, and shown how light, how weak,
If thou resist. The Fiend look'd up, and knew
His mounted scale aloft ; nor more ; but fled
Murmuring ; and with him fled the shades of night.

THE END OF THE FOURTH BOOK.

